

Catherine D. H. 1879
THE

COALITION:

OR

FAMILY ANECDOTES.

A NOVEL.

BY MRS. BOYS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DEDICATED BY PERMISSION TO

MRS. HASTINGS.

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M,DCC,LXXXV.



TO MRS. HASTINGS.

TO you, ever honoured, much esteemed Madam, the genuine Tribute of a grateful Heart, the Production of an unpractised Pen, aspires for Acceptance, and pleads for Protection.

To lay it at your feet was my utmost Ambition;—that granted, my most sanguine Wish is gratified.

PARDON me, my dear Madam, that encouraged by your Favour, and proud of your Approbation, I have presumed on your Indulgence, to raise a Trifle into Consequence by the name of HASTINGS.
Glorious

Glorious Appellation ! Asia's Ornament, and Britain's Pride ; equally distinguished, equally graced, by Female Excellence, and manly Worth : Who will dispute my Pretensions, when they have received a Sanction so respectable, or who will doubt the Merit of a Work which you have condescended to patronize ?

IMPRESSED with the most lively Sense of an Obligation so inexpressible, I have the Honour of remaining,

Most truly and respectfully,

Dearest MADAM,

Your most grateful

And most obedient

Humble Servant,

BERNER'S-STREET,

April 4, 1785.

S. BOYS.



THE COALITION.

CHAPTER I.

IN a pleasant and delightful village, in the county of Kent, about forty miles from the metropolis, lived Mr. Westbury, a gentleman of very good estate, which he inherited from his ancestors in a regular gradation, just as they had possessed it from theirs, for a great number of years. The outward appearance of his mansion, was truly gothic, an appearance, which through every addition he had carefully endeavoured to preserve; the inside was perfectly modernized, and replete with

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every elegant convenience, happily expressive of the taste, and magnificence of its present mistress. Fancy could not paint a scene more romantic than its situation; sufficiently elevated to become an object of enquiry for the distant eye, it of course commanded a most extensive prospect: in the front, a regular descent of fertile fields laid open to the view two of the finest rivers in England, interspersed with fruitful islands, beyond which, the eye in vain, might wander for a boundary, till sea and horizon, formed it by their seeming junction.

THE character of Mr. Westbury is extremely difficult to be described; if we give it as we remember it to have stood, it must consist of enumerated virtues only; but from some traits, which have since come to our knowledge, we must confess, if free from real vice, it was not exempt from weakness, and inconsistency. At the time of our introducing him to our readers, he was about the fortieth year of his age, till when, he might be said, to have



have lived somewhat like the Patriarchs of old. He seemed to consider, that the good things of this world, which he so largely possessed, were placed in his hands for the general benefit of mankind; that his duties were proportioned to his means, and every opportunity which he neglected of applying them to the relief of the truly necessitous, he looked upon as an omission in his stewardship, which his great master would not pass over. The villagers around him, he regarded as a large family, and himself a sort of parent, who owed his attention equally to every part; or who, at least, conceived their wants, could only entitle them, more or less, to his particular notice, and of course, the real indigent and distressed, never implored his benevolence in vain; nor did he content myself with barely fulfilling, what he thought his duty, as to their corporeal necessities, but endeavoured equally by domestic advice, and friendly conversation, to establish universal harmony and good fellowship amongst the lower class of his neighbours; and, if

notwithstanding his attention, animosities and differences sometimes arose, his interposition seldom failed to reconcile, and settle every thing of the kind, on the most amicable footing; for though indeed his decision did not always satisfy both parties, yet the impartiality of his character, was too well established, to be in the least affected by the murmurings of a dissatisfied few; those, therefore, who were not convinced of his justice in their own minds, thought it most prudent to be silent, as their complaints were likely to pass entirely unregarded.

His practice on every occasion, corresponded with his precepts; his admonitions to peace and good order, were irresistible, because his own life, bespoke a series of nothing else. His religion, like his manners, was simple and plain; he steadily adhered to the principles of his own, without sentencing to perdition, every man, who from education, or conviction, happened to think otherwise; disputes on religious distinctions, were
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to him, idle and profane; he considered every truly good man, as truly religious, whatsoever might be the tenets he professed, and that the appearance of religion, if unaccompanied with moral rectitude, whatever name it might bear, was in effect nothing. As a gentleman, amongst those of his own sphere, Mr. Westbury was considered in a light no less amiable; in a word, he at that time stood confessed, one of society's best friends, and human nature's brightest ornaments.

BUT here the faithfulness of narrative obliges me to declare, that the lustre which surrounded this wonderful man, was not all his own; indeed, more than half his virtues were borrowed from a woman, and that woman, his wife. I scarce flatter myself with the hope of gaining credit for the assertion; however, so it was, and I must endeavour to account, in the best manner I can, why it was so; but having hinted something of a lady, and as I shall have occasion to mention her again, I think it but civil to intro-

introduce her properly, by giving some account of her.

FIRST, then, as to her person : handsome of course, the ladies I trust will excuse me, and as the gentlemen may possibly be offended by my partiality in favour of my own sex, I am happy to have it in my power to make my peace, by bringing a handsome woman forward, to plead for me ; the plan I honestly confess, is not my own, I have heard of wonderful things having been so effected ; I have heard, indeed, of counsellors whom gold would not tempt to plead, yet moved by the soft persuasion of a pretty mouth, have become more eloquent than Demosthenes ; of judges naturally upright, who have been bribed to decide against law and equity, by the dazzling influence of a pair of bright eyes. Mrs. Westbury's figure was that of a fine woman, her stature somewhat superior to the middle size, was at once singularly elegant, and uncommonly correct. Easy in her motion, graceful in her manner, she was an object strikingly

strikingly interesting. Her features, if separately examined, could hardly be said to exhibit one specimen of perfect beauty; but then the *tout ensemble* was so extremely insinuating, that while the eye was endeavouring to discover which was the defective feature, the captivation of the senses rendered the discrimination uncertain. The form of her face was such as the Grecian painters fixed on for their standard of beauty; her nose Aquiline, her eyes rather dark, large, and sparkling, ever anticipated her lips, by half explaining her thoughts; her complexion more of the lily than the rose, but being entirely unacquainted with the delicate tints, so beneficial to the cheeks of modern belles, she could only enliven hers with the continual cheerfulness and tranquillity which reigned in her breast.

SUCH as we have attempted to describe was the exterior of Mrs. Westbury; her mind, we can scarce venture to meddle with, since it was composed of an assemblage of qualities, which, though well enough

enough for the wife of a country gentleman, the more enlightened part of the *beau monde*, have long thought proper to declare of very little importance. Some few modern accomplishments she certainly did possess, but then, in a number of the more brilliant ones, she was entirely deficient; for instance, she was no strenuous admirer of cards, had an unconquerable aversion to every species of gallantry, and could hear of plays, balls, and masquerades, without feeling her heart palpitate, to share the imaginary pleasures.

SHE had a great portion of good sense, joined to a lively, sparkling wit; but then, here was one of her most capital deficiencies; for though she gave continual proofs of the first, she was never known to make the most of the last, by *properly* applying it to expose the foibles and infirmities of her most intimate friends, or in publicly ridiculing the unfashionable qualities of her husband. I readily confess, these are traits in her character, too *absurd* for me to defend, but when I inform
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my readers, this lady received the latter part of her education in the school of adversity, they will, perhaps, in some measure, excuse the notions and prejudices she imbibed, in a situation, which I sincerely hope, most of them are unacquainted with.

MRS. WESTBURY's father was an officer of distinction, who bravely lost his life in the service of his country, leaving a widow and two daughters, with a very slender provision; unabated grief for a deservedly beloved husband, soon terminated the existence of the first, and Amelia, his eldest daughter, it was supposed, fell a victim to the baseness of a young man of fashion, who had long sought her for his wife, but who, on the death of her protectors, was vile enough to take advantage of her inexperience, indigence, and affection, and seduce for a mistress, the woman who had received his honourable addresses.

HARRIET the youngest now only remained, and her beauty and misfortunes became the subject of much conversation; Mr. Westbury having just left the University, had taken possession of his paternal estate; he was young, and his head naturally turned to romantic exploits. Having heard of this fair one's distress, he endeavoured to see her, and found her superior to the work of his own imagination. He offered her his hand without hesitation, which she accepted, and in return for his generosity, made him the best wife in the world.

CHAP. II.

MR. WESTBURY, with a great share of sense, had a considerable portion of what is commonly called good-nature, but which in our opinion might more properly be termed a weakness of disposition. He could not refuse his as-

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sent to any proposition, though at the same time, his reason disapproved of it; which indiscriminate complaisance, rendered him as liable to be the dupe of designing men, as to be really beneficial to meritorious objects. In the selection of his friends he was equally inconsiderate; if a man pleased him, it was sufficient, he enquired no further; to such he was warmly attached while they were present, but when absent, he thought no more of them. In instances of this kind it was that Mrs. Westbury's attention and address were of such infinite service in standing between him and the difficulties he sometimes incurred; he wanted stability, and resolution, she saw it, and endeavoured to give it him, without letting the world know she did so; she watched the extreme flexibility of his disposition, with a view of guarding against the ill effects of it, and she succeeded to admiration; his flexibility was not general, he was easily persuaded to adopt an opinion, but when he had made it his own, he was tenacious of it to a degree,

degree, and opposition never failed to confirm his obstinacy. Mrs. Westbury availed herself of this part of his temper, and by the most prudent management, turned it to his own advantage; she had a mode of saying things with seeming indifference, and by dwelling on hints and outlines, till he began to notice them, cheated him into a belief that they were his own; she pointed out the merit of those she wished him to favour, by professing she had received her idea from him, spoke familiarly of the faults of those whom she wished him to avoid, not without complimenting his penetration in having discovered them. In this manner, what might have been the source of serious misfortunes, the singular prudence of an amiable woman happily constituted the private basis on which Mr. Westbury publicly stood considered in the light we before represented him. Sensible of his virtues, she wished to display them to the eyes of the whole world; sensible of his weakness, she wished to

not to be so exposed: saw and conceal

conceal it from herself, and every other person.

THE only offspring of this happy pair was a daughter; the young Harriet was equally the pride and darling of her fond parents. It is not to be supposed that a woman, whose conduct, as a wife, was so exemplary as Mrs. Westbury's, could be deficient in the other duties of her station. As a mother, she was equally distinguished. Her ideas, perhaps, were somewhat singular, as she did not conceive a boarding-school to be in the least necessary for the education of a young lady; that a dancing-master should teach her to walk, and a music-master to sing, with every other accomplishment, she judged very requisite: but she conceived the useful duties of the domestic, and the ornamental duties of fashionable life, might be inculcated under the mother's inspection, better than in any other situation.—— From the care and tuition of such a parent, it is not to be doubted, but that Miss Westbury received every improvement

ment her young mind was capable of; and as she was an only child, it may be reasonably imagined, that she experienced every kind of indulgence. It is sufficient to say, every attention was liberally bestowed, and her friends were happy enough to find all their cares amply repaid by the quick progress she made through every part of her education, till, at the age of fifteen, Harriet Westbury was generally considered as the most elegant and most accomplished young lady the whole country could produce.

HITHERTO hers had been halcyon days; an uninterrupted series of sunshine had prevailed; the clouds of misfortune now began to envelope her fair prospect; death deprived her of her affectionate and incomparable mother, just when the mother's prudence became most necessary for pointing out and directing her present, and future conduct in life.—Mr. Westbury, who might be truly said to adore his wife, was plunged, by her loss, into ineffable distress. He mourned her not only as a wife, but

but as a friend and counsellor, from whom he had derived the greatest part of the happiness he ever experienced, and to whose prudence and judgment he really owed the merit of a thousand good actions, which had procured him the respect and esteem of all who knew him.

Miss Westbury, who tenderly loved and revered her mother, was equally afflicted by her loss; but she could not behold her father's distress, without attempting to alleviate and soften it, by every dutiful attention. When alone, her tears flowed plentifully to the memory of a parent, to whom she owed so much; but at other times she appeared as chearful as possible, and the serenity of her countenance, in a great measure, concealed the anguish of her heart.—Mr. Westbury sincerely loved his daughter, and easily saw how studiously she suppressed her own feelings, with a view of lessening the acuteness of his; he determined to profit by the example her affection had suggested, and confine his sorrow to his own breast, while
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an assumed external composure should lead her to believe he had considerably got the better of his affliction.—Thus, by attempting to deceive each other, they really deceived themselves; and by restraining their feelings, in a great measure subdued them; till what was at first an excess of grief, gradually subsided into tender regret, and they could at length mutually lament the dear departed object of their affections, without those violent emotions at first accompanying every idea, which brought her more immediately to their remembrance. They returned imperceptibly to the society of their friends, and time, by degrees, re-established a serenity, which had at first been universally despaired of—Miss Westbury, as she advanced in years, increased in her resemblance of her mother; and by copying, as nearly as possible, the conduct of so excellent a model, she acquired all the affection, confidence, and influence, which Mrs. Westbury had been used to enjoy, the good effects of which her father had been so happy in experiencing.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

THE blooming, the accomplished Harriet, began now to reign an object of universal admiration, and numerous applications were made for her favour, by lovers of every denomination; no one, however, was happy enough to succeed: she was still very young, and as she was in this particular, as in most others, declared mistress of herself, it is not surprizing, that she refused to give her hand, while her heart remained entirely unbiassed.

SMOOTHLY and happily, once more, glided her hours, when her father invited into his family a young gentleman, who just at this period arrived from Oxford to officiate as curate, in the village of Mr. Westbury. To that gentleman, Mr. Lewisham brought letters of recommendation from many of his old, and most intimate college friends; he waited on him

him with those letters, immediately on his arrival, and was at first received with all the politeness to which his respectable credentials entitled him ; but from a very short conversation, Mr. Westbury became so thoroughly charmed with the young man's delicacy and sense, that he at once warmly insisted, he should immediately take up his residence intirely in his family. He introduced his daughter, and desired her to second his invitation, which she accordingly did, with such persuasive influence, that it was impossible for a disposition naturally compliant, as Lewisham's was, to persist in a refusal : to confess the truth, Harriet was no less prepossessed in favour of this agreeable stranger, from his first appearance, than Mr. Westbury was by his first address ; and on the other hand, though Lewisham had firmness enough to decline the hospitable invitation of Mr. Westbury, he felt a something so commanding in the figure, and at the same time, so irresistibly pleasing, in the soft accents of his charming daughter, that he could not possibly

possibly keep to his resolution of residing at the parsonage house; and that very evening, to his own surprize, he found himself socially, and domestically initiated into Mr. Westbury's family, with all that agreeable ease, and unrestrained confidence, which characterises the actions of sensible, well bred persons. Nothing could be superior to the happiness which this little family experienced in the society of each other. No man had naturally, a higher relish for the Belles Lettres than Mr. Westbury, but his taste had long lain dormant for want of a rational friend to participate the sublime, the soul exalting pleasures: in Mr. Lewisham he found that friend; indeed this gentleman's strong natural sense, improved by a refined education, and a happy mode of displaying his talents, agreeable to the taste of his companion, could not fail of conciliating the friendship of Mr. Westbury, while his thorough knowledge of the French and Italian languages, together with a lively genius for poetry and music, rendered him no less pleasing and

and instructive, to the accomplished Harriet.

WE are at a loss to conceive, what could have been Mr. Westbury's ideas, when he so warmly pressed this young gentleman into his family; he saw him, handsome in his person, and engaging in his manners, sufficiently so to attract even his attention; and he saw his daughter exactly in the same light; what then could he possibly suppose must be the consequence of his introducing a domestic intimacy between two young persons, whose minds were so perfectly harmonized, and composed as it were, of cords vibrating in the sweetest unison with each other, and on whose personal attractions it was impossible to look with indifference. The privacy and remoteness of their situation, rendered the circle of their occasional society very confined; and small as it was, the members who composed it, were a very different set of beings from Mr. Lewisham; Mr. Westbury was sensible of all this, and those were the very motives
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which actuated his conduct, without once reflecting, that the superiority which made him desirable, must likewise make him dangerous. We are aware it may be answered, perhaps he only wished to see his daughter happy, and thought the man, who had merit sufficient to gain her heart, was the best calculated to make her so. Had such been his sentiments, he would have acted right, but it was far otherwise; he wished her happy it is true, no man more ardently wished it, and it was with a view of promoting her happiness, that he had so earnestly solicited the society of Mr. Lewisham. But with respect to marrying her, she now reigned the idol of his heart, and he thought her richly deserving of a peer, and would as soon have thought of her marrying his favourite hound, or favourite horse, as a man who could not offer her a title.—Not to tire our readers by dwelling on a scene, the conclusion of which, must be extremely obvious, we shall content ourselves with barely saying, that Harriet's sweetness of temper, and personal charms, entirely

entirely deprived Lewisham of all the felicity he had at first enjoyed, and which he had vainly flattered himself with a long continuance of. But, considering his feelings as highly presumptuous with respect to the object which inspired them, he determined to confine his new-born passion carefully within his own breast, and never even to breathe a sigh, which should lead the lovely girl to the slightest discovery of his perfect adoration. He rigidly adhered to the dictates of his honour, and disciplined his countenance into such good order, that an assumed indifference appeared in his face, while hopeless love preyed on his heart.

HARRIET'S inexperience favoured his imposition; she suspected no disguise, but supposed his feelings were really such as they appeared, and became piqued by his inflexible composure. She was, in fact, as little at ease as himself; her gentle, artless heart had not been sufficiently guarded against a thousand nameless qualms, which shone conspicuous in the person

person and mind of her elegant companion. She had no idea of Lewisham as a lover; she would have felt herself extremely hurt at thinking of him in that light. She knew not very well what she would have had, but then she could not help conceiving, that if she really possessed the numerous attractions, which had been so lavishly ascribed to her, it was extraordinary that he should be the only person blind to them. She was desirous of seeing him pleased with her presence, and dejected by her absence. In a word, she wished him to be less insensible, without asking herself why she wished it, and would have been happy to have seen her appearance produce any marks of emotion, without once considering from what motive that happiness must have proceeded, she felt herself extremely dissatisfied, but imputed it to her supposed want of consequence, and resolved to resent his inattention, by increasing the reserve of her behaviour, and concealing the satisfaction she experienced in his society.—From this time, two of
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the most happy, became two of the most miserable beings existing; and by their affectation, the one of indifference, and the other of reserve, were continually increasing the embarrassment of their situation. All their vivacity, ease, and sprightliness, were entirely lost; and short sentences and bare monosyllables now made the whole of their late chearful and elegant conversation.—Mr. Westbury saw with pain the unpleasant change in the disposition of his family, but having not the slightest suspicion of the real cause, and all his enquiries producing no satisfactory information, he was obliged to admit of the worn-out excuses of head-aches, low spirits, and slight indispositions.—His inquietude, however, soon increased; from grave, Harriet grew absolutely melancholy; her anxiety preying continually on her spirits, became visible in her countenance, and a total decline in her health was apprehended. Every feeling mind will be, in some measure, sensible of Mr. Westbury's distress; his daughter was the darling of his

his heart; and he prefer'd her infinitely to his own existence, he ransacked the whole country for advice, and every physician of eminence was called in to her assistance; but these being a set of persons by no means versed in the disorder under which Miss Westbury laboured, it is not in the least a matter of surprize, that she received but little benefit from their prescriptions.

CHANGE of air was at last deemed necessary, and it being now the season of resort to one of our most fashionable watering places, thither was the dejected Harriet recommended, as it was hoped the air, and the water, together with the amusements of the place, would prove equally efficacious for the re-establishing of her health, and the relieving of her mind from the load which evidently oppressed it. Harriet felt herself exceedingly dissatisfied with the thoughts of this journey, and opposed it with every argument in her power; but having no good reason to alledge against it, while

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she chose to conceal the real one, she was obliged to submit, and saw, with pain, the preparation for their departure forwarded with the utmost expedition. She could not indeed very well account to herself for the aversion which she felt to visit this general assembly of the young and gay, but so it was, she was somehow or other particularly attached to her own residence; and her health being the cause of her removal, she began to be too apprehensive of the nature of her disorder to conceive any great advantage would arise from change of place. But then her father's tender solicitude gave her inexpressible pain, and though entirely indifferent as to herself, she could not refuse her consent to any thing which might possibly lessen his anxiety on her account.

SUCH was the situation of Miss Westbury, a few days prior to that, appointed for her departure; and we should take upon us to say, nothing could be more uncomfortable than such a situation, did not

not that of Mr. Lewisham fully contradict the assertion. Harriet was unhappy, but Lewisham was exquisitely miserable. He had observed the alteration in Miss Westbury's appearance and behaviour with heart-felt concern, but without daring to enquire, or entertain the least idea of the cause. He most earnestly wished her to know what he suffered on her account, but that, according to his notion of right and wrong, was impossible, conceiving a premeditated attempt to disclose his unhappiness would be criminal to a degree, the immense difference of their situation considered.

Mr. Lewisham did not recollect, that Love was the only miracle-worker now existing; that he alone could reconcile the most palpable contradictions; and, like death, level all distinction. He never once suffered himself to forget, that, on his first arrival, a stranger in the village, Mr. Westbury had received him with friendship and hospitality, that he still ate of his bread, drank of his cup, and

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slept

slept under his roof; and, in return for such unmerited favours, to think of robbing him of his quiet, by seducing the affection of his child, appeared to him an action of unparalleled ingratitude, at which his nature shuddered. He sickened at the bare apprehension of losing her forever, but yet he dared not attempt to gain her favour by means, which his religion and his conscience equally disavowed. He loved her most ardently; could he do otherwise? But his affection was as pure as the amiable object which inspired it. Influenced by no mercenary views, or mean selfish gratifications, had he been master of the world, he would have laid it at her feet with pleasure; but having nothing to offer, he determined silently to resign himself to his fate, and never to interrupt the peace of her gentle bosom, by an acquaintance with his wishes or complaints.

C H A P. IV.

WITH this determination his mind was steadily employed one evening when he retired to rest, from which he was disturbed in the middle of the night by a confused alarm of fire. He rose immediately; but who shall attempt to describe his situation, when he found that wing of the house, in which was Miss Westbury's bed-chamber, in one continued blaze? Mr. Westbury, raving for his daughter, and the servants all trembling for the fate of their mistress, which they looked on as inevitable. Lewisham lost not a moment in reflection, but rushed impetuously through the flames, and with much difficulty gained her chamber, where the terrified maid, unable longer to support the horror of her situation, sunk fainting in his arms. He tore a blanket from her bed, in which he wrapt her, and, with his lovely, senseless burthen, attempted to regain the yard;

yard; but, alas! the stairs fell in before he approached, and by that means his return was effectually barred: when suddenly, recollecting a small window in her dressing-closet, which overlooked a canal in the garden, he determined to risque that chance at least for her preservation, and throw himself into the water. His design was no sooner formed than executed, and he had the good fortune by this means to preserve a life infinitely more dear to him than his own. He gained the bank of the canal, on which he deposited his almost lifeless charge, in a state of mind not easily described. Miss Westbury needed immediate assistance, but that part of the house was too remote, and the general confusion too great, for him to hope that any would accidentally offer, and in such a situation, how could he possibly leave her alone, though for the express purpose of seeking it. Luckily, the appearance of a stable-boy ended his distress. He ordered him to seek Mr. Westbury instantly, and desire some assistance might be sent

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Miss Harriet; the boy stood gaping, unable to reply, till Lewisham repeated his request, when he retired with the utmost speed. Harriet, on her first return of sense, faintly recollecting some part of what had past, anxiously enquired for her father; the sound of her voice had very near deprived Lewisham of his reason, unable to answer her question, and unconscious of his transport, he pressed her fervently to his bosom. Father of mercy, said he, I thank thee! she lives, and I am happy! Harriet heard him distinctly; how much, said she, Mr. Lewisham, am I indebted to your humanity, which could lead you so greatly to venture for my preservation; still gazing with extacy on her agitated countenance, sweet excellence, said he, how little do you know the soul of your distracted, doating Lewisham, who knew not himself how ardently he adored you, till the moment which threatened him with your loss for ever.

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THE arrival of Mr. Westbury, and his servants, terminated their conversation: nothing could equal the surprize of that gentleman; the figure of Mr. Lewisham was indeed, not very unlike what the terrified imagination of the boy would have inclined him to expect. Lewisham, when he left his chamber, on the first alarm, had nothing on but a loose dressing gown, which had suffered considerably by the flames, in his passage to Miss Westbury's chamber; his hair, and eye-brows had also undergone some devastation, so that when he was first discovered, just escaped from the canal, it really needed some degree of penetration to decide, whether he might be ranked amongst the human species, or not; superstition, it is allowed, is the companion of ignorance; and fear, equally the production of both; the mind of the lad, by the general confusion, together with the awful time of night, was tremblingly alive to every impression of supernatural appearances; he instantly concluded this could be nothing but the spirit of Mr. Lewisham, to whom he
thought

thought it bore some likeness; he flew precipitately from the garden till he met Mr. Westbury, seizing him by the arm, his hair standing erect, with every mark of exquisite horror depicted in his countenance, oh! Sir, says he, in the most pity-moving accents, I have seen Mr. Lewisham's ghost.

GOOD GOD! exclaimed Mr. Westbury, what has frightened you? What have you seen?

IN the garden, Sir, replied the lad, scarce able to articulate, Mr. Lewisham's ghost is on the bank of the fish pond, it spoke to me, called me by my name, said something of Miss Harriet, and desired to speak with you; dear Sir, do go to it, do go and speak to it, or I am deadly afraid it will come here.

MR. WESTBURY, unable to comprehend any thing from the confused account of his servant, treated him with very little attention, when recollecting his daughter's

ter's dressing-closet overlooked this identical canal, and that he had an imperfect view of Mr. Lewisham rushing that way, a few moments before the apartment fell in, he felt somewhat like a momentary gleam of hope dart a-cross his imagination, but fearing to indulge it, he turned to the garden with trembling steps, where the sight of Mr. Lewisham, supporting his child, his dear, his darling child, who but a moment before he had supposed lost for ever, fixed him to the ground with silent astonishment.

THIS, my good Reader, is a scene over which, like the painter of Agamemnon, at the sacrifice of his daughter, we must beg leave to draw a veil; every parent who has so loved, so lost, and so recovered a beloved child, will do justice to the feelings of Mr. Westbury on the occasion; and to those whose life has produced no circumstance at all similar, how inadequate would be every attempt of ours to give them an idea of it; so very difficult is it for the mind to participate in a lively manner,

ner, the joy, or distress, of another person, unless their sensibility has been first raised, and enlarged by a comparative situation.

C H A P. V.

WE will now, then, suppose Miss Westbury properly disposed of, and every assistance administered of which she stood in need; we will suppose Mr. Westbury has given vent to all the gratitude of his heart, both to the hand of divine providence, and the more immediate instrument of his daughter's deliverance; in short, without being minutely tedious as to circumstances, we will suppose the face of affairs at Westbury-house, begin to recover their original tranquillity, the compliments and congratulations usual on the occasion largely paid, and Harriet's danger with Lewisham's heroism, the topic of general

neral discussion, for which every one accounted in the manner most pleasing to himself; we are indeed credibly informed, that no small number of young ladies, whose great hearts glowed with the laudable ambition of popular distinction, envied her exceedingly the eclat of her escape; and seriously lamented the inanimate sameness of their own life, which had never furnished them with one lucky opportunity of owing their preservation to the glorious gallantry of a knight errant; but as we did not hear of any one really courageous enough to fire her father's house, for the sake of immortalizing her name, by the narrowness of her escape, we cannot amuse our readers with the merit of such a character, we must therefore return to the less spirited inhabitants of Westbury House.

Our young friends found the perplexity of their situation, if possible, increased; Harriet remembered with extreme pleasure, the tender expressions of Lewisham, and knowing the honesty of his heart too well,

well, to suppose him capable of attempting to deceive her, she sincerely wished him to renew the interesting subject; on the other side, he, who had only been betrayed in an unguarded moment, to intrust her with a secret of such consequence to himself, dreaded nothing so much as her displeasure; fearful of reading indignation in her eyes, he dared not direct his to her face, but increased by his timidity, that reserve which, as he understood it, confirmed his apprehension.

THE Bath journey, which the late accident had postponed, was again brought forward, and the following day was fixed for their departure. In the evening, as Mr. Lewisham was sitting in his room, his head reclined on his hand, with every appearance of dejection, he was surprised by the entrance of Miss Westbury's favourite maid; the honest girl, with a countenance expressive of the strongest agitation, began: "It does not signify, "Mr. Lewisham, for I must, and will
"speak,

“ speak, I can hold my tongue no longer!
“ I very well know it does not become
“ servants to talk so to gentlemen,
“ but I can’t help it, and so there’s an
“ end of it. Dear heart alive! ’tis the
“ oddest thing in all the world; why
“ here’s you and Miss Harriet mope,
“ mope, sigh, sigh, all day long from
“ morning till night; I am sure it makes
“ me so melancholy, I don’t know what
“ in the world to do with myself, and
“ for what pray? why only because you’re
“ both of a mind, and don’t know it,
“ and are afraid to tell one another,
“ when dear me, I know very well, and
“ every body else might know it, if they
“ made use of their eyes. Why here’s
“ you now, as good a sort of a gentleman
“ as ever lived, and there’s my dear
“ young lady, who every body loves.”—
Mr. Lewisham unable to comprehend the
tendency of this harangue, thought proper
to interrupt her.—“ Every body,”
replied he, “ Mrs. Betty, must love her,
“ your lady is an angel:” “ indeed, and
“ indeed, your reverence, so she is,”
said

said Betty, "every body ought to love
her, and does love her; but for all
that, I know what I know, she had a
great deal rather some folks loved her
better, and was not so secret about it;
when dear heart for all that, 'tis as plain
as the nose in one's face. Why do you
know now, Mr. Lewisham, yesterday,
no longer ago than yesterday, that ever
was, she gave me her bran span new
levite, made of the emperor's eyes, and
what do you think it was for pray?
why for nothing in all the world but
saying you was the handsomest man I
ever saw; yes indeed, I assure you,
'twas for nothing else, she did not tell
me so to be sure, but I saw it very plain
in her sweet face." Lewisham sighed;
"Why there now," continues she, "what
can that sigh be for; I declare and pro-
test you make me cry, so you do, and
all because you won't do as you ought
to do. Why, as I was going to say,
here's you shut up moping here, and
there's my dear lady moping in the
garden there, when instead of that, if
you

“you would but go to her, and talk to
“her, as you ought to do, you might
“both be as merry as any thing; yes in-
“deed Mr. Lewisham you might, and as
“happy too”. “My dear Betty,” said
Lewisham, “what can I possibly say
“to Miss Westbury? indeed at this time,
“I dare not speak to her.” “No to be
“sure,” says Betty, “was ever any
“thing like you, and yet the other night
“you dared run through the fire and
“flames to get to her, and then dared
“throw yourself out of the window into
“the canal, and so run the hazard of
“drowning yourself, and now, you dare
“not speak to her, and don’t know what
“to say to her. Oh dear! oh dear!
“how can any thing be so foolish? ah
“Mr. Lewisham, I know very well what
“you ought to say to her: go into the
“garden, and when you meet her, make
“a very fine bow, and then ask how she
“does, and say ’tis a sweet evening, and
“how happy you are to see her look so
“well, and then gently take hold of her
“hand, and put it under your arm, and
“then

“then squeeze her fingers a little, and
“so by degrees tell her how you love
“her dearly, better than any thing in
“all the world.”

“OH! Betty,” replied Lewisham,
“heaven is my witness, I love Miss
“Westbury ten thousand times more
“than words can express, yet dare I not
“meet her looks, or attempt to tell her
“what I feel.”—Poor Betty burst into
tears, “’tis very well Mr. Lewisham, ’tis
“very well,” said she, “you have a
“mind to kill her, and make her pine
“herself to death, when you may make
“her one of the happiest women in Eng-
“land, so you may: is she not a hand-
“some lady, and a sweet lady, and a lady
“that any lord in the land might jump
“at?” “My dear girl,” said Lewisham,
“your lady is all you have described her,
“and infinitely more. It is my idea of
“her worth, and my own unworthiness,
“which compels me to adore her at this
“painful distance; I look up to Miss
“Westbury as a superior being, which
“it

“it is my duty to approach with veneration only. I thank you, my good girl, sincerely thank you, for your friendly intention, but what can I do? I would with pleasure lay down my life for Miss Westbury’s happiness, but should I attempt to address her, a frown would strike me motionless at her feet.”—“Lord sir,” said Betty, “how you talk! but ’tis very well, I find you will not put any confidence in me; you know it does not become servants to tittle tattle, and tell the secrets of the family; but now Mr. Lewisham let me ask you, what you think could induce me to come here, and speak to you in the manner I have, if I had not very good reason, for what I say? and yet you will be so dull, and so bashful; but however, Mr. Lewisham, if you will not understand me I can’t help it; only remember this, Miss Harriet is now in the garden, to-morrow morning we set out for Bath, perhaps you may never see her again; indeed if she goes so unhappy, I am sure you

“ will

"will not, for she will soon fret herself
"to death; and so Mr. Lewisham, I wish
"you a good evening."

THE extreme archness which accompanied the girl's last words, had a sensible effect on the drooping spirits of the person to whom they were addressed; perhaps the miracle-monger just then came into his head, however that was, he began to think Betty must be in some measure right; that though her warmth might lead her to be too sanguine in his favour, yet without some ground, she never could have said so much. After much deliberation, he determined to see Miss Westbury, and with all the resolution he could summon, endeavour to learn from her lips the confirmation of his hopes or fears; with a book in his hand he sauntered to the garden, and found Harriet sitting on the bank of the canal, where the effusions of his heart had escaped him a few evenings before; he bowed (agreeable to the directions of Mrs. Betty) Harriet rose; he approached her with more courage than he

he had supposed himself master of, and discerning nothing terrific in her countenance, he was enabled to touch on the subject Mrs. Betty had pointed out, "that it was a fine evening." Harriet returned an approving smile;—he hoped his presence did not interrupt her;—so far from it, she was particularly happy that accident had favoured her with his company; Harriet's manner, and matter were equally favourable: they turned to a walk in the garden, but as no encouraging smile from either, gave us any reason to suppose our company was desired, we could not be so shockingly impolite, as to follow them; by which instance of our good breeding, we entirely lost the opportunity of favouring our readers with their conversation; we believe our absence is not much to be regretted, for those kinds of *tete a tetes* in general, though vastly delightful to the parties concerned, are extremely tedious and insipid when re-told, which as we understand it, is proof positive, that it must be something besides the mere words, which

which renders them interesting. However, agreeable to the documents of his sensible directress, our young friends were very soon socially walking in the manner she had prescribed, and sometime after, when she was sent by Mr. Westbury, who had been absent, to inform Harriet of his return, she found her in an alcove, with Mr. Lewisham by her side, tenderly pressing her hand to his lips ; poor Betty's heart danced with joy, while she viewed the work of her own creation ! Harriet, alarmed by her silence, enquired the cause : Oh ! ma'am, replied she, I was never so pleased in all my born days. Ah ! Mr. Lewisham, you don't seem afraid of being frowned to death now ; but I only came to tell Miss Harriet my master was come home.

NEITHER Harriet, or Lewisham could restrain a smile at Betty's address, the goodness of whose heart was fully explained, in the simplicity of her language. My good affectionate girl, replied Lewisham, I acknowledge myself infinitely obliged

obliged to you; your angel of a mistress has, by her generous condescension, made me the happiest man in the world.—Yes, said Betty, I knew she would, and God bless her for it, for I am sure you are a sweet gentleman, and she is a sweet lady too, that's what she is! You say true, said Lewisham, she is indeed a most sweet lady, but as I said before, though she has generously condescended to make me happy, by acknowledging a partiality in my favour, the present situation of our affairs, renders it absolutely necessary that nothing of the kind should transpire; therefore, my good girl, we must request your secrecy on the occasion, and beg you will take particular care that you suffer not the smallest hint of it to pass your lips.

BETTY felt herself exceedingly hurt that her taciturnity should be questioned; but was pacified by an assurance the caution was not excited by any doubt of her prudence, but that perhaps, not knowing the

the necessity of secrecy, she might have been led ignorantly to betray them.

THEY now returned to Mr. Westbury, who was delighted with the chearful appearance of his Harriet, whose internal satisfaction beamed forth on her countenance; but as he was unacquainted with the immediate cause of her happiness, flattered himself her young mind was become pleased with the idea of her intended jaunt, though she had at first argued so strenuously against it. He was exceedingly deceived in his conjecture, the idea of this journey was the only thing which now gave her any uneasiness, and so heartily did she wish to avoid it, that she felt more than half inclined to feign herself indisposed, but she had a natural abhorrence for every kind of falsehood, and well knowing how much her father would really suffer on the occasion, she could not bear the thought of giving him so much distress; and farther, believing the tranquillity of her mind would produce the happiest effects on her exterior, she conceived

ceived the time of her absence would not continue long.

IN the morning Harriet had but a moment to bid Lewisham farewell, which she did with a heaviness about her heart, foreboding the difficulties that would interrupt the early, happy return she now promised herself.

WE very much fear being censured by the outrageously delicate, for not concealing this part of the weakness and credulity of Miss Westbury's character; we bow the knee to the justice of such reprovers, and confess her conduct was diametrically opposite to the established practice of the more enlightened part of her sex; but the fault is not ours; we are bound to "speak of her as she really was; nothing to extenuate, or set down ought in malice;" her feelings sprang spontaneously from nature, regulated by innocence, and not refined by art; we certainly cannot defend her, but
will

will beg leave to offer something by way of apology.

HARRIET was well acquainted with Mr. Lewisham, and was thoroughly sensible of his many virtues. While she doubted his attachment, reserve was necessary to conceal her own, an accident had first discovered his affection, from thence she saw the struggle betwixt his love and his respect; equally flattering to her merit and her charms. She feared no deceit, his honest nature was greatly above it; what was she then to do? Satisfied of his truth, convinced of his love, was she to disdain in her own heart what she prized in his? Or, with kindred sincerity, endeavour to cherish an affection, which she felt of so much consequence to her happiness?

BUT to return. Nothing happened to Mr. and Miss Westbury till their arrival at Bath, where they soon found themselves settled among a set of people, of all ages and characters. Mr. Westbury

entered fully into the dissipation of the place, at first, with a view only of amusing the young mind of his Harriet; but meeting with many of the friends of his earlier days, he again returned to their society, with an avidity truly astonishing. A man of his character and fortune could be at no loss for acquaintance; many distinguished him, some indeed for his sake, but by far the greatest part for their own. Here was the rock, on which this gentleman seemed to be in most danger of striking; to appear pleased with him, never failed to please: a sort of complaisance which he repaid indiscriminately, and by which, he was continually laid open as a proper object for the designing part of mankind to prey on.

AMONGST the foremost of those who sought the friendship of Mr. Westbury for their own private advantage was Mr. Claverly. His real name we must beg leave to suppress, in respect to a very worthy family, distinguished by the same appellation.

pellation; but he being necessary to our history, we must take the liberty of introducing him to our friends.

CAPTAIN, or Mr. Claverly, was a Caledonian by birth, the youngest of four sons, (all national prejudice we here disclaim) his father was an Englishman, some time an officer of the customs, but having made a seizure of some consequence, which he conceived he might safely appropriate to his own convenience, he of course, did not trouble himself to enter it at the Custom-house; unfortunately, the embezzlement was discovered by application being made for enfranchising the prohibited articles; no such articles were to be found; the breach of trust was clearly traced, and Mr. Claverly stood accused; but he had heard of the enquiry, and apprehending the consequence of his detection might prove of a serious nature, he thought it most prudent to retire out of the way; he accordingly crossed the Tweed, where he intended to remain till the event should

be known: he soon found that his name was erased from the list, and that his person would not be secure if he returned. In this situation, destitute of friends, character, and employment, he thought himself very happy in the good graces of an inn-keeper's fat widow, whom he soon after married, and retired with her to a small farm into the Highlands, where, as we have before observed, he had four sons, the youngest of which was our most noble captain; this boy was taken notice of for his wit and sprightliness by a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who having a son at school at Edinburgh, offered to place young Claverly with him as a sort of companion; the offer was too advantageous to be in any danger of meeting with a refusal; his benefactor provided for his decent appearance, and he was immediately sent to the theatre of flagellation. He was eight years old when he first made his entry, and four more he continued to enjoy the favour of his patron: he had indeed been slightly accused of some trifling misdemeanors, but
for

for want of proof, had hitherto escaped scot free; just at this period, a petty speculation was discovered, which from the first, seemed to bear very hard towards our hero, but a material evidence being absent, strict examination was postponed till next day; Jack was no enemy to discipline, so far from it, he thought there was infinite fun in seeing his master wield the birch, and he had very frequently employed all his cunning in promoting scenes of this kind; but then as to his own part, he always chose to be a spectator, not an actor, on these occasions: in the little pieces designed for the next day's representation, a principal character was designed for him, which he did not like; he reasoned on the subject with himself, till he concluded as he was but one, his presence might certainly be dispensed with; he therefore, resolved to escape by flight, what, if he staid, would be unavoidable. In pursuance of this, he watched till the sable goddess dispensed universal quiet, when, making free with the purses of

his school fellows, he left Edinburgh with no design of returning in haste.

LONDON is the grand object which catches the attention of adventurers in general; thither, therefore, Jack directed his steps, and on his arrival really thought himself the happiest of human beings, entirely master of his own actions, he might be truly said to enjoy his new acquired liberty. When he left Scotland, his purloined treasure consisted of three guineas, and a few shillings, he had never been so rich before, and as he possessed nothing of the economical spirit of his country! he was content to make the most of the present moment, and leave futurity to itself; with such a disposition we are not to wonder that his finances decreased apace; short indeed was the duration of his golden dream, and the revolution of a fortnight beheld him brandishing a link at the door of Covent Garden theatre.—He was now entered into a fraternity, which could not fail of being highly improving to the morals of a lad of his natural tendency:
but

but there he remained not long, it was his good fortune to be employed in lighting from thence to a neighbouring coffee-house, a gentleman, whose benevolent eyes never overlooked the children of distress; this gentleman was particularly pleased with Jack's assiduity, and on asking him some questions, was no less pleased with the pertinence of his replies; he dismissed him that evening with half-a-crown, and desired to see him next day; Jack readily obeyed, and was then closely examined as to his name, family, and situation, to all which he returned such plausible, and at the same time, such seemingly artless answers, that the good man was induced to think him deserving of a better fate; and from motives of humanity, took him into his own family.

JACK's experience had improved his wisdom if not his honesty, and he resolved in future, never to risk the certainty of food and raiment, for a trifling consideration. In his new situation, he behaved entirely to the satisfaction of his employer,

employer, who neglected no opportunity of bringing him forward, till his own family affording no higher post, and finding he had received a very decent education, he recommended him to the attention of a young nobleman of his acquaintance, who received him accordingly. This was in every respect, a situation infinitely more pleasing to Mr. Claverly, than the one he had left. His present employer was a young man of the world, rich, gay, and magnificent; and his business being wholly confined to personal attendance, he had every opportunity of discovering the particular traits of his master's character; he very soon perceived this gentleman's prevailing passions were a love of gaming, and a partiality for the fairest part of the creation; of the mysteries of the first Mr. Claverly then knew nothing, but finding his master spared no expence in his gratification of the latter, he determined for his own interest, to make himself useful, and having accurately studied his taste, he proceeded to display a specimen of his abilities;

abilities; his master was perfectly satisfied with the brilliancy of his domestic's talents in this particular line, and the natural indolence of his disposition rendering him content with the success, without the trouble of procuring it, he looked on his attendant as a valuable acquisition, and rewarded him with a liberality which his assiduity, had it been engaged in a better cause, really merited. In consequence of his new employ, many were the honourable scenes in which Mr. Claverly found himself engaged; but as they are entirely unnecessary to the thread of our history, we shall pass them over in silence, not presuming to pay our readers so ill a compliment as to suppose them capable of being entertained by a picture of the depravity of human nature, in a series of illicit practices, when unconnected with historical facts. We have therefore nothing to do with Mr. Claverly for some years, when we find him making an acquaintance with Fanny Baily. This lady was the daughter of a merchant in the city, who, having largely defrauded his

creditors, by three successive bankruptcies, to the utter ruin of a number of industrious families, was at length obliged to make his escape to a neighbouring kingdom, leaving his affairs and his daughter in a state equally unsettled; his creditors again took charge of the first, and a distant relation, a milliner of some repute, pitying her youth and inexperience, offered an asylum to the last.

MISS BAILY, though under a necessity of accepting, could not bring herself, by any means, to like her situation: she had received just so much of a boarding-school education, as was infinitely more calculated to vitiate than improve the mind. An imperfect knowledge of French, dancing, and music, together with a taste for dress and expence, was her whole stock of mental acquirements, and from those proceeded the disgust which she felt for her present mode of life. Being sent one morning to receive the orders of a very celebrated lady, she was met by Mr. Claverly, who was waiting
with

with a message from his master; her shewy figure, complexion, and youth, attracted his attention: he accosted her in the most artful manner, lamented the caprice and injustice of fortune, which suffered so much beauty and merit to pass unnoticed, reduced to the necessity of attending, where she certainly ought to command; and that surely the highest degree of earthly felicity would be the lot of him, if ever any man was so happy, as to be permitted to distinguish her as she deserved, and to place her in the situation for which she certainly was designed, and to which her uncommon charms would add so much lustre. He soon found, however, all circumlocution unnecessary, for that the lady was perfectly of his opinion, and wished nothing more ardently than such a situation as he described. He spoke plainer, was heard, and approved, he accordingly received her address, provided apartments for her reception, and having informed his noble patron of his proceedings, he was

happy

happy enough to finish the treaty, to the mutual satisfaction of the parties.

THE connexion between this lady and gentleman was of much longer duration than its accidental commencement promised; every wish of her heart was gratified, in the attainment of a splendid provision; and being sensible of the precariousness of her situation, that the breath of her protector could, in an instant, reduce her to her original nothing, she turned all her address to preserve his favour, and was satisfied with her success: but all sublunary affairs have an end. An amiable lady, of rank and fortune, made an entire conquest of this gentleman's heart; and when he laid himself and fortune at her feet, he thought himself particularly happy that they were accepted; before his marriage, he prudently resolved to disengage himself both from his favourite mistress and the very convenient agent of his amours, not conceiving it at all eligible to take into his family a person so well acquainted with

with the illaudable part of his conduct. To the lady he presented a thousand pounds, to the gentleman, five hundred; and farther took occasion to hint, that if they could approve a matrimonial connexion, they might always command his interest for the advancement of their fortunes. Mr. Claverly had no objection, the lady had, Miss Baily did not want sense, and had lately seen a great deal of the world, and thought she had an undoubted right to turn her experience to her own advantage. We must here observe, our present Mr. Claverly was a very different person from the Mr. Claverly when recommended into the service of his late master; he had much improved his figure and address, by imitating his superiors, and had made himself master of many fashionable accomplishments. We then observed, he was ignorant of the mysterious management of cards and dice; but he was now a perfect adept in every part of the science. All these observations had struck Miss Baily, and she looked on him as exactly the sort of person

son she wanted. "My good friend," said she, "you cannot conceive that I have any personal objection to you; be assured, I have not; but I refuse you, because I am certain there is a thousand more proper matches for us both to be met with. You are handsome and agreeable; with your person and address there is nothing you may not expect, if you are but prudent: we know the world, and we know each other. The first will be of infinite utility in the conduct of our public views, but be assured the last will banish every shadow of felicity from our private moments, if united with each other. The very experience, which may be the basis of our happiness in distinct connexion, will be the ground-work of misery, if we are tied together. Lend me, then your assistance; let us unite our abilities, and turn them against the rest of mankind." Mr. Claverly had neither a bad person, nor a first-rate understanding, and the deficiency of the last

not

in-

induced him to think the first much better than it really was. However, what he wanted in sense was amply supplied in cunning, which, in his present state, was infinitely the more useful commodity. Miss explained her scheme of fortune-hunting, which met with his hearty concurrence, and they began to prepare for its immediate execution. The town was what is called empty, but they were not ignorant it was Bath which emptied London, as one was just as proper a stage for them as the other. Thither they determined to proceed, but it was absolutely necessary they should pretend to some kind of character; Miss was partial to the army, a red coat and cockade were powerful allurements. She had seen them recommend the fop, the fool, and the coxcomb. Mr. Claverly was positively neither; of course, when supported by such flattering auxiliaries, his pretensions would considerably increase. By referring to an army list, they found an officer of the same family name, in a regiment of foot then stationed in Ireland;

land; there was indeed a material difference in the appellation which the baptismal ceremony had conferred, but that was nothing, a military uniform instantly undid what his godfathers and godmother had done many years before. He entered his room plain Jack or John, but returned the man of war all over. He was now to be Captain Charles Claverly, and Miss was to be his sister. An equipage and servants were provided, and they set out with an eclat, strongly prognosticating success. They arrived at Bath, took elegant lodgings, and lived in the style of genteel people, when Mr. and Miss Westbury first made their appearance.

CHAP. VII.

CAPTAIN, and as we are now to understand her Miss Claverly, had enquired minutely into the character and fortune

fortune of every person who appeared at all proper for their designs, and in consequence of such enquiry, had prepared their plan of operation against a Cornish squire, and his sister, residing in the same house ; but all idea of that was laid aside on their meeting with Mr. Westbury, his disposition being a soil, promising them a much more plentiful harvest ; their league was to be offensive and defensive ; they were to be mutually aiding and assisting to each other, and it was equal which succeeded, as the benefits were to be mutual, but in the present case, success flattered them both ; Miss Harriet's reserve appeared the only obstacle, the getting over of which might be attended with some difficulty, but when Miss Claverly became Mrs. Westbury, there was no doubt, but that her influence, joined to his address, would certainly succeed.

THE captain got introduced to Mr. Westbury in the character he assumed, and very soon, by appearing particularly attached to his company and conversation, per-

persuaded the too credulous gentleman he really was so; and his complaisance was returned with a sincerity it little merited; so effectually did he worm himself into his friendship and confidence, that in a very short time, Capt. Claverly was all in all with Mr. Westbury, who seemed to relish no other society; his partiality was by no means any impeachment on his understanding, no man could be more entertaining than the captain. Naturally gay and sprightly, his raillery was directed to the general characters of the place; according to his own account he knew every body; and having a tolerably creative genius, he delivered fictitious anecdotes and remarks, in a style so perfectly natural and ludicrous, that he appeared to have a fund of real humour.

Miss Claverly had hitherto lain dormant; the captain had never spoke of any such person: it was now judged proper for her to appear, which she accordingly did the next evening, dressed in the most brilliant style, attended only by
her

her brother and the young Cornish lady before-mentioned, than whom a more striking foil could not possibly have been selected; Mr. Westbury was alone when they entered, and was immediately surprized by the extreme elegance of this new figure; he enquired who she was, with uncommon eagerness, but could obtain no satisfaction; every body was in the same situation, all were enquirers, none could inform, till observing the captain (purposely) detached from his fair companions, he addressed him with the same question, and was exceedingly astonished when he coolly replied she was his sister. Mr. Westbury's curiosity was considerably increased by never having heard of her; he begged to be introduced, the captain complied, but with a kind of half reluctance, which he took care should be visible.

We have before observed, Miss Claverly was handsome, and as she now appeared with every auxiliary of taste and dress, nothing could be more charming.

A soft

A soft languor, and delicacy, were imputed to indisposition ; what could be more interesting ? Is it in the heart of man to refuse his tenderest compassion to a delightful young creature, whose lovely face wants only the bloom of health ? She appeared chearful, polite, and sensible, and Mr. Westbury was delighted with his new acquaintance ; the next day the captain was reproached for having concealed this elegant female ; he replied with great indifference, his sister was one of the few who came to Bath to drink the water, and that noise and dissipation were by no means calculated for the present state of her health or spirits.

So far their plan succeeded — Mr. Westbury's visits to the captain became more frequent ; Miss was seldom seen, but, as her brother's particular friend, he was sometimes favoured with her presence : he discovered new charms in her person and conversation upon every opportunity he had of observing them, but at the same time, he did not overlook a particular

particular gravity which sat on the captain's brow, during all such opportunities, and the uncommon reserve, with which he treated every enquiry relative to his sister.

HAVING received repeated proofs that he was not deceived, he questioned him as to the cause of this reserve; the captain was at first silent, but on being farther pressed, he replied in a manner evidently calculated to evade, and not answer the question. Mr. Westbury was not satisfied, and hinted that he thought his present conduct very inconsistent with his natural freedom and confidence; this friendly reproach had the desired effect; the captain began by begging his pardon, but flattering himself his situation would excuse, what he was under the necessity of saying; that Miss Claverly saw very little company of any kind, and that Mr. Westbury must be sensible of the extreme delicacy of female reputation, that his sister's fortune was too moderate to place her above an attention to appearances, and

and that in short, he was rather apprehensive the very frequent visits of a gentleman, with whose acquaintance he had been so recently honoured, might subject her to observations, which he should be extremely sorry to hear.

MR. WESTBURY, who seldom embarrassed his ideas by refined reasoning, was surprized at the solemnity of this address; but observed in return, he did not presume any person would think of visiting Miss Claverly with improper designs. the captain replied, No! (with particular emphasis) he did not apprehend any person would presume to think of Miss Claverly with improper designs; but that he supposed it very possible for a gentleman to like the conversation of a sensible, well-bred woman, without entertaining any designs at all! and that he could not help thinking, in the eyes of people who could only judge by appearances, the delicacy of a lady's character might suffer, nearly as much from the one as the other; it must be allowed that

was a bold stroke, but it was at present unsuccessful, and by being rather premature, had well nigh ruined the whole of their scheme.

C H A P. VIII.

MR. WESTBURY, at that time, had not thought of Miss Claverly in the way they wished, he therefore only acknowledged the propriety of the captain's observations, without adding a syllable of his own; for several days he even declined visiting his friend, but accidentally meeting them in the evening, at the Rooms, the malignity of his evil genius prevailed, and he yielded to his inclination of conversing with them. Miss Claverly once more blessed her good fortune, and looking on this as a moment of infinite importance, she determined to make the most of it; every allurement which

which art or nature had furnished her with, was practised on the occasion; she treated him with studied attention, and the blushing, timid softness of her countenance, whenever he addressed her, had something in it, inexpressibly engaging. Mr. Westbury felt it so; he thought her more than ever charming, and when he left her, found for the first time, a restless vacancy in his mind, the nature of which he did not clearly comprehend; in the morning his feet imperceptibly carried him to the captain's door, he was not at home, but Miss was gracious enough to receive him; Mr. Westbury appeared melancholy and thoughtful. Miss, all attention, enquired in the tenderest manner concerning his indisposition, and on being informed his spirits only were oppressed, she industriously varied her efforts to relieve them; she chatted with him in the most sprightly manner, played some lively music on her harpsichord, sung him the airs which she had before heard him commend, and discovered so much uneasiness on his account,

count, that it was impossible to be unaffected by it; Mr. Westbury was perfectly enchanted, he politely took her hand, and looking steadily in her face, my dear Miss Claverly, said he, you are absolutely irresistible, let me ask you how you would receive a husband of near sixty?—Perhaps Mr. Westbury meant nothing by this question, perhaps Miss Claverly understood it so, but being at the same time very sensible it was not her business to destroy, by an ill-timed severity, a conversation of such importance, but rather to encourage it all in her power, she blushed, and casting down her eyes with the prettiest affectation imaginable, hesitatingly replied, when a gentleman possessed the merit of Mr. Westbury, his age was seldom thought of. An answer so obliging, certainly demanded something civil in return, and Mr. Westbury was in a humour to pay it; he kissed her hand, her cheek, her lips; she blushed, and chid him, but with a gentleness, not calculated to make him desperate, he was in

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raptures with her condescension, and became eloquent in the language of love; the return of the captain interrupted their conversation, and Miss soon after retired to bed.

MR. WESTBURY immediately addressed himself to the captain, my dear Sir, said he, I esteem you as my most particular friend; I am charmed with your sister, Miss Claverly has given me to understand in general terms, that it is sometimes possible, a lover of my age, may not be disagreeable; I shall leave you for the present, but will do myself the pleasure of calling in the evening, when I shall be happy to hear from you, if with respect to herself, I may presume to apply her compliment to my own particular case! So saying, he retired, and it was lucky for the captain he did so, as it was likely all his caution, and cunning might have been insufficient for the decent concealment of the joy occasioned by this address; he lost no time in communicating the long wished-for intelligence to his ally; a consultation was immediately held

held as to their future proceedings; having arrived so far with success, it was judged, some little difficulty ought to be started, with a view of enhancing the value of the favour about to be conferred; that, at least the captain should represent the inconveniencies which might arise from the disproportion of the union in the eye of the world, with a view of placing his own conduct in the most disinterested light; nothing could be more artful, they knew the propensity of human nature to despise whatever is too easily obtained, and they knew from Mr. Westbury's disposition, the most effectual mode to accelerate and hasten any event in which he was concerned, was to oppose it at any rate; but if that opposition could be judiciously masked, under a pretended consideration for his character, and happiness, it would confirm their success beyond a doubt; having settled their designs, they waited impatiently for the arrival of Mr. Westbury; the captain received him alone, and very soon proceeded to business; "My dear

“ friend, said he, I have been exceed-
“ ingly embarrassed by the unexpected
“ request which you made this morning,
“ I have however mentioned it to Miss
“ Claverly in the manner you desired,
“ but before I inform you of her opi-
“ nion, will you permit me to impart
“ my observations on the occasion, and
“ permit me to impart them with the free-
“ dom a man ought to do, who feels him-
“ self honoured, and obliged by your
“ friendship.” Mr. Westbury having
assured him he should think his free-
dom a proof of his friendship, the
captain proceeded, “ I have no reason
“ to suppose, Mr. Westbury, but that
“ your proposal this morning was se-
“ riously intended, indeed I am con-
“ vinced it could not be otherwise;
“ but I conceive you have not coolly con-
“ sidered the affair; do, my dear Sir, re-
“ flect on its disadvantages, before you
“ proceed, and on the point of view, in
“ which the malignant eye of the world
“ will see it; Fanny is, in my opinion,
“ an amiable girl, but it is possible the
“ brother’s eye magnifies her good qua-
“ lities,

“lities, the public may not see her in
“the light that I do, add to this her
“fortune is too trifling to mention, and
“that is a deficiency which is never
“overlooked, and for which, merit,
“however conspicuous, is deemed no
“equivalent; consider, my dear Sir,
“how eagerly the idle, and censorious
“seize every trifle which may tend to
“reduce the worthy and meritorious
“character to a level with their own,
“with how much activity will they cir-
“culate the tale, that a man in every
“respect, so very respectable as Mr.
“Westbury, has made himself ridicu-
“lous by marrying a girl without
“friends, without fortune, whom no-
“body knows.”—Mr. Westbury replied
with a scornful kind of smile, “I am
“much obliged to you captain for your
“sincerity, but must confess, in my
“opinion, many of the reasons you have
“urged against, make strongly for my
“side of the question; hear my state of
“the case,—Mr. Westbury’s fortune
“was sufficient for all his purposes, and
E 3 “having

“having no desire to increase it, he was
“at liberty to consult his pleasure; he
“met with an amiable young woman,
“whose society he flattered himself
“would make him happy,” and that he
“had courage enough to try the experiment, in defiance of all the tattle
“tattle of the Bath Tea Tables, therefore my dear captain, if you have
“nothing more deterring to offer, than
“the remarks of a set of people, the
“whole of whose opinions I despise,
“you may proceed to favour me with
“the information of what I am to expect from Miss Claverly.”—The captain confessed he had nothing more to offer, and that his sister’s sentiments would come best from herself, but that for his own part he did not suppose they could possibly be inimical to his wishes.

Miss was accordingly applied to, who certainly did not refuse, nor could she be said absolutely to comply; she acknowledged herself sensible of the honour designed her, but declared she had never
once

once entertained a thought of changing her situation; that she was perfectly happy at present in the friendship and esteem of her brother; she had ever considered an encrease of connexion as an encrease of cares, and very often the source from which numberless disappointments took their rise; and a variety of such common place observations, which have been played off on the same occasion so often, that they are absolutely worn thread bare, and the flimsiness of their texture, is become visible to the eyes of all, but those, who are content to be blinded by a cobweb. Lovers always come under this denomination, therefore we are not to be surprized that Mr. Westbury thought them sentimental delicacies, worthy only the divine lips of his accomplished mistress.

THE friendly captain, however, took up the lover's cause; he thanked his obliging sister for the compliment she had paid to his affection, and owned he should never be happy, but in seeing her so,
but

but with all due deference to her opinion, he could not help looking on marriage, as a duty, alike appertaining to every individual: he had no idea of rushing headlong into an imprudent connexion, but to an offer of the kind, if no real objection appeared, he thought prevarication ridiculous, and very unworthy the practice of a sensible woman. No member of society, in his opinion, was created merely for themselves; but as so many links in the great chain of human nature, formed alike by the hand of the divine architect, for the benefit and support of each other, and all equally owing their assistance, both by theory and practice, to the perfecting and establishing the great object, the good society. She might be happy as she was, indeed, he had no reason to doubt it; but then, it was a selfish kind of happiness, which if generally encouraged, must end in a total extinction of the creation: there certainly was a parental obligation entailed from our ancestors to our fathers, and from them to us, an obligation from
which

which no person was exempt, when providence demanded repayment, by prudently offering the means. "You, my dear," said he, "are not an idle romantic girl, but a woman of sense, perfectly capable of knowing your own mind, and will, I dare say, favour me with a satisfactory answer. Mr. Westbury is my particular friend; you can have no idea that I should have even mentioned the proposals of any man, had I myself known a shadow of reason for disapproving them; therefore what is your opinion? You know I have ever been charmed by the open sincerity of your disposition, do not then hesitate in an instance, where sincerity is most amiable: in one respect, your delicacy may embarrass you; my friend, Fanny, is sensible he is not young, if his age is an objection, I request you will candidly own it is so; for though we (I include myself) may be disappointed, be assured, we shall not be offended by your refusal."

HERE ceased the friend and brother; such a friend, and such a brother, few people are happy enough to be blest with. Poor Miss Claverly was prodigiously distressed, but what could she possibly do, so circumstanced? The Captain had certainly pressed her rather abruptly, the delicacy and decorum of her sex considered; but then he had professed himself led to do so, by his knowledge of her sense and sincerity. To demand time for consideration was opposing his sentiments, and of course tacitly confessing herself foolish and deceitful; it was impossible to submit to that, no alternative was offered, no loop-holes allowed for second thoughts, because she was a woman of sense, and ought to be above them; the conclusion was mortifying enough, considering the extensive prerogative which had ever been allowed the sex for the practice of inconsistency; but this gentleman was establishing a theory, which must infallibly upset the whole system of flirtation; a few lady-like airs, a little tyrannizing *hauteur*, was
to

to be the decisive criterion of character, and wherever they were found, the stamp of weakness was to be indelibly fixed.

BUT to return to Miss Claverly. She first looked at the Captain, then blushed, hesitated, and directed her eyes to the floor, with all the pretty confusion in the world; then again at the Captain, unable to speak. At last she could just say, she thought he treated her unkindly, and in the warmth of his friendship forgot all consideration for his sister.

HE coolly replied, he was sorry she thought so, but as he must conclude from thence Mr. Westbury's addresses were disagreeable, he should say nothing further on the subject, and immediately arose to retire with great solemnity of countenance.

MR. WESTBURY interposed, and requested the Captain would spare him the mortification of knowing he was the cause of a moment's uneasiness, either to
him

him or his sister; for his own part he should be too happy in Miss Claverly's approbation, if she condescended to grant it without reluctance; but he was by no means surprised that a young lady of her merit and sense should think a little consideration necessary, prior to her decision on a subject of so much importance, as the uniting herself with a man rather advancing towards the vale of life.

THE Captain begged his pardon, but declared himself of a different opinion; the necessity of consideration could only arise from doubt, and if Miss Claverly now entertained any doubt, either of herself or him, she would be highly to blame to think of a union of the kind: but even admitting the justice of his observation, he saw no reason why his sister should make use of a puerile evasion instead of a rational answer.

THE poor lady was greatly affected by her brother's harshness, and very pathetically

tically applied her handkerchief to her eyes, to conceal her tears, or the want of them. She begged him not to distress her by a behaviour so unaffectionate; she had no doubt, she could have none, but was perfectly sensible of Mr. Westbury's merit, and the honour his distinction did her; and giving her hand to the Captain, she desired him to dispose of it as he thought proper.

THE cloud on his brow instantly disappeared, and sunshine resumed its place; he kissed the passive hand, and resigned it to Mr. Westbury, who received it on his knees, with all the ardour and gratitude of the most passionate lover. He professed himself the happiest of mankind, and intreated an early day might be fixed on for the completion of his felicity. They were now all compliance, and the third day following was appointed for the conclusion of a well-planned, long premeditated scheme, which had so far succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectation of the actors. They passed
the

the evening as such an evening deserved, and Mr. Westbury quitted them, elate with the idea of his approaching happiness.

C H A P. IX.

WHEN Captain Claverly retired to rest, he was led into a train of pleasing reflections on the happy success of their plot, and the present state of their affairs; but having given them a thorough investigation, he began to alter his opinion, that in reality they were not so flourishing as, on a superficial view, he was inclined to believe. Their design had certainly in a great measure succeeded, but how did it really benefit him? Why, perhaps, just nothing at all. He had laboured indefatigably in the vineyard of fraud and dissimulation, and the vintage was in a fair way of being

ing gathered by a person, who, if she chose, might entirely exclude him from sharing the produce; as the wife of Mr. Westbury, she would be enfranchised from any dependance on him, and all that she should acquire would be her own. He had not forgot the terms of their treaty, but conscious of the depravity of his own heart, he was partly inclined to suspect the integrity of one, whose morals and principles were so much like his own; it certainly was risking a great deal on nothing, for as nothing he considered the faith of his companion. She had ever been ready to deceive others, and it was more than probable, when she had, by his assistance, established herself on a basis too firm to be easily shaken, she might be equally ready to deceive him. He turned over a number of schemes for blending his interest inseparably with hers; one only seemed feasible and effectual for keeping her continually in his power, and with that he was determined to exact her compliance, or instantly give her up. In the morning, he hinted
his

his doubts, Miss promised liberally, but the coin not being current, he refused it. He informed her of his intention, and demanded her immediate compliance. She demurred, he insisted, she reasoned, scolded, intreated, raved, but all to no purpose; he was inflexible, and they quarrelled. The affectionate Captain Claverly and his amiable sister absolutely quarrelled, they were very angry and very civil, and were venting their wrath with a world of politeness, when Mr. Westbury arrived at the door. He perceived their uneasiness, which the Captain instantly accounted for, by producing a letter from a friend at —, a few miles distant, requiring the immediate presence of himself and sister, they must depart that afternoon, but would certainly return the next day, if possible. He expressed himself greatly distressed that any thing of the kind should interfere at present, but observed, these were circumstances which, by being unforeseen, were unavoidable. Miss Claverly reddened, and bit her lips with anger and vexation,

vexation, whilst her lover was lamenting the cruel necessity which deprived him of her presence, and earnestly intreated them, to bear in their minds how much unhappiness he should suffer by every moment's delay ; the captain assured him he need not doubt their inclination to accelerate their return all in their power ; then looking at his watch, he informed his sister the carriage would be at the door in an hour, when he should hope to find her in readiness, and without waiting for her reply, and taking Mr. Westbury by the arm, he walked out with the most stoical composure.

NOTHING could equal the lady's rage when she found herself awed by the superior artifice of her associate. A master stroke of the kind was what she least expected, as it absolutely exceeded her idea of his abilities ; cunning she allowed him, enough for the executive part, but never gave him credit for penetration sufficient even to see the bottom of her designs, much less traverse her schemes by
any

any of his own; the captain had in fact, very judiciously ascertained the weight and measure of his companion's faith; she considered him as the instrument of her convenience, by the assistance of which, she should easily gain the elevation before her, and what became of him afterwards was a matter of no consequence; by his expedient, her purpose was in part defeated, she was not to rise at all, unless she would secure his ascent at the same time: she at first resolved on opposition, whatever might be the consequence, but a moment's reflection convinced her it would be sacrificing too much to her resentment; the evident impossibility of escaping at least, induced her to comply, and she began the necessary preparation, heartily cursing the malice of her stars, which forced her to purchase her good fortune at such an intolerable price. When the captain returned, unable to restrain her rage, she accosted him with, "you see Sir I submit to your terms," certainly replied he, with a sneer, "you are acting with your usual prudence; indeed

“ indeed how could you possibly refuse
“ the most trivial request of a brother,
“ so friendly, and affectionate.” She replied in a style equally contemptuous, but he coolly informed her she was only running into an needless expenditure of words, which would amount to nothing; that they had a great deal of business on their hands, and therefore the more expedition they made use of, the better, as the carriage was then waiting at the door. She flung herself into it, bustling with malice, and the captain seated himself by her with the most provoking indifference; they arrived at —, where by the prevailing influence of gold, he procured every thing requisite, and the next morning secured her fidelity to his own satisfaction; they returned to Bath agreeable to their promise, and Mr. Westbury received them with the sincerest joy; the following day was appointed for the celebration of their nuptials, and to avoid the impertinence usual on the occasion, they agreed to depart for London immediately after. Mr. Westbury retired

tired earlier than common, as well to prepare his daughter for the reception of her mother-in-law, as to settle his own affairs in readiness for leaving Bath.

MISS WESTBURY had ever been dissatisfied with her situation; the waters had been tried, but without effect, and she had no relish for the amusement and dissipation which surrounded her. Mr. Westbury was at first, unwearied in his attention and endeavours to relieve her uneasiness, but all to no purpose, her reluctance to public appearance increased, till he was at last prevailed on to leave her entirely to herself; her mind was wholly engaged with the idea of Mr. Lewisham, and she wished nothing more than to indulge it undisturbed; she divided her time betwixt writing him the overflowings of her heart, and talking of him with her faithful confidant, and she was so happily satisfied while thus employed, that she never once turned a thought on the great alteration in the general tenour of her father's conduct, which from the
most

most affectionate, had dwindled by degrees into the most indifferent; Betty, whose thoughts were more at liberty, was not so short-sighted, the man who lately seemed to enjoy nothing without the presence of his daughter, was now continually absent, he indeed slept at home, but at other times, he was only to be found with his good friend, the captain. Betty frequently reasoned on this subject with her mistress, and undertook to account for it a number of ways, all very foreign to the truth; for though this penetrating domestic possessed the full portion of abigalian curiosity, and was indefatigable in the pursuit of information, nay, though we have the sincerest esteem for our friend Betty, in consequence of her numerous good qualities, yet we cannot help owning, where the truth was not compatible, she could establish a theory of her own, yet did her good genius never whisper even in a dream, that a wedding was on foot, any ways relative to the head of their family; Harriet wished to return home, more earnestly than

than ever, and was heartily vexed at this continual procrastination of her father, when she received a letter from Mr. Lewisham, informing her, his good and worthy friend, the Rector of that place, was dead, and that the new incumbent intended residing on the spot, and officiating himself; he pathetically lamented the necessity of his leaving a situation which had been endeared to him by her society, and where he had again flattered himself with the hopes of enjoying her charming presence; that his disappointment would be insupportable, did he not believe every event of human life, governed by the immediate direction of divine providence; but that being his persuasion, he endeavoured by religion, and philosophy, to consider present evils, as trials only, which might ultimately be productive of good; that he conceived hope certainly was implanted in the breast of man, as the source of happiness, and designed to irradiate by its divine influence, the clouds of adversity, whenever the mind was in danger of sinking under

under their oppression ; he professed himself inclined to look forward to happier days, believing the great author of universal nature, had doomed no one of his creatures to perpetual misery ; he concluded with observing, he hoped soon to have the pleasure of kissing her hand, as he was engaged to spend a few weeks with an old school-fellow at Burton, but a few miles from Bath, and he flattered himself, a few days would give him the happiness he so ardently longed for.

MISS WESTBURY had received this letter near a week, and was now in hourly expectation of seeing Mr. Lewisham, when Mr. Westbury returned, as we before observed, earlier than usual, to inform her of the wonderful change about to take place in his situation. We cannot take upon us to account for his repugnance ; but he felt himself vastly at a loss how to enter on the subject ; he certainly could expect neither opposition, or animadversion from his daughter ; Harriet's conduct having ever been implicitly

placitly obedient, and the knowledge of his pleasure was the standard of her duty ; perhaps conscious the action was a foolish one, might occasion his silence ; however that was, the difficulty remained, when Harriet very opportunely opened the congress, by enquiring when they should leave Bath ; the question was asked with the utmost indifference, and arose merely from a want of something to say, but her attention was very forcibly roused by Mr. Westbury's answering, to-morrow at twelve o'clock ; " Good God sir," said she, " is not your resolution singularly sudden ?" " It is my dear," replied he, " and occasioned by circumstances no less singular ; you are surprized Harriet, but recollect yourself, as I wish to speak with you on a matter of great importance ; I am sensible I ought to have done it sooner, but my own uncertainty must excuse me ; in short child, not to increase your suspense by circumlocution, I am to be married to-morrow morning, and we shall immediately leave this place

" for

“for London.” If Harriet was astonished by her father’s first answer, the conclusion of his address, did not tend to lessen her surprize; at last recollecting herself, “Is it possible, my dear Sir,” said she, “that you should think me so unworthy of your confidence, as never to inform me of your intention, till nearly the moment of its execution. The lady must certainly entertain a very ill opinion of your daughter’s conduct, if she knows you have one; indeed Sir, I must appear extremely deficient in respect; if she is esteemed by you, she is entitled to my obedience, and I should have been happy to have rendered her every attention due to your intended wife.”

MR. WESTBURY replied, many reasons had concurred in preventing his introducing her to the lady in question before; that she knew he had a daughter, and was prepared to treat her with all the esteem her amiable character merited; he doubted not, but she would find herself

perfectly happy in the acquisition of an agreeable friend and companion, in the person of Mrs. Westbury, as he was well convinced her disposition was too gentle and good, ever to adopt the behaviour of the mother-in-law; that for his own part, nothing was, or ever could, be dearer to him than his daughter, whose happiness should continue to be his first wish, and first consideration, as her affectionate conduct had long been his only and sole delight; then observing it was late, and that he would not detain her from her rest, he wished her a good night, and retired.

HARRIET, who had very little relish for the conversation, was heartily glad of her father's absence; she repaired to her own apartment, and gave free vent to her tears, which she had with much difficulty restrained, while in his presence; a variety of passions crowded into, and divided her imagination; her father's unexpected marriage, was a circumstance every way unaccountable; and then she was obliged

to quit Bath at a moment's notice, when she hourly looked for the arrival of Mr. Lewisham, whom she now had additional cause for wishing to see; curiosity had likewise a share in tormenting her; who could this lady be? Was she young? Was she handsome?—All this was addressed to her faithful Betty, who knew as little of the matter as herself; but with respect to the wedding, was infinitely more disturbed; Betty looked farther than the present moment, and perceived her consequence in the family would be considerably lessened by the acquisition of a mistress; as the favourite of Miss Harriet, she had frequently given herself airs of great importance, which she now feared must be entirely laid aside; this idea distressed her more than every other consideration, and conceiving her mistress pretty much in the same predicament, supposed her grief arose from the same cause; she was at first silent, fearing to offend, as Harriet ever treated her father's name with the truest reverence, nor suffered any one to men-

tion him but with respect. Betty conceived the present instance was so enormous, she certainly might be allowed a little liberty in her reflections, and began to inveigh bitterly against her master for being so ridiculous as to think of marrying at his age; Miss Westbury interrupted her harangue, and insisted on her silence, her father had an indisputable right to please himself, and surely knew best how to act for that purpose; she was only grieved she could not see Mr. Lewisham, nor knew where to write to inform him of what had happened, and the reason of her sudden departure, or to what part of London they should remove; they held a long consultation on this subject, without being able to fix on any promising plan, till Betty advised the leaving a few lines with the mistress of their present lodging, and that she had a relation in town, where he might address a letter for them. Harriet, knowing no better method, complied, wrote the letter, gave the necessary orders to her servant, retired to bed, and in the morning was in
read

readiness to accompany her father to his intended bride.

WE have before given the outlines of Miss Claverly's person, her present dress properly adapted to the occasion, was elegantly simple, a white muslin spotted with gold, tastefully drawn up over white satin, with a gold fringe, composed her gown and petticoat; fine auburn hair, free from powder, ornamented with white feathers, and pearl pins, was all the decoration of her head; the natural lily of her complexion, blended with the artificial rose, made up the exterior of Miss Claverly, and to the astonished eyes of Miss Westbury, she thus appeared a most charming creature. She held her father perfectly excusable for his partiality, conceiving it nearly impossible to see and not admire her. With respect to age only, she could be objected to, all her good nature being insufficient to remove a sort of awkward sensation at the idea of subjection to a mother-in-law, but little older than herself; she however paid her compliments with

with tolerable grace, thanked her politely for the honour she was about to confer, and profest herself happy in being so nearly allied to a lady of her merit and charms; all this was language of course, which Miss Claverly paid back with two-fold interest, as it was much better calculated for the meridian of her intellects, the captain was not absent, when flattery was on the carpet, that would have been a misfortune indeed, for flattery might be justly termed the captain's element; judge, then, if he neglected an opportunity of shining so advantageously.

ALL these little preliminaries adjusted, they proceeded to the performance of the sacred ceremony, and Mr. Westbury received his bride from the hand of her brother, as a jewel of inestimable value: nothing had been hitherto said as to settlement; they well knew they had nothing to risque, and feared to stipulate what they might gain, lest in return the nakedness of their own land should be discovered; but now Mr. Westbury, whose

whose heart was opened by his success, kissed his charming wife, and requested she would favour him by her acceptance of a deed, entitling her to four hundred pounds per annum, as a small proof of his confidence and esteem; his generosity met with all due acknowledgment, and they departed for London, in appearance the happiest set of people in the world; nothing impeded the progress of their journey, they arrived in town, and in a few days were settled in Berkeley-square; their house, servants and equipage properly besitting their character and fortune, and entirely in the stile of people of fashion.

THE captain remained with them, he sometimes talked indeed of joining his regiment in Ireland, but Mrs. Westbury could not think of her brother's leaving her, and Mr. Westbury, whose affection for his *cara sposa* hourly increased, joined her entreaty with so much warmth, that he obligingly promised to favour them with his company all the winter.

NOTHING

NOTHING could be happier than the exterior of our little family, Mr. Westbury all tenderness, Mrs. Westbury all gratitude, and the captain, friendly, attentive and polite; so that were we not naturally inclined to suspect the smoothness of a stream, might arise from the muddiness of its bottom, and that unusual calms are generally succeeded by uncommon storms, we should have been led away by the delusive appearance, to pronounce them secure of a long series of happiness.

MISS WESTBURY'S tranquillity was of short duration; she soon perceived she had gained a lover in the person of her new relation, and the discovery gave her infinite concern; her heart was absolutely engaged, and she foresaw the captain's addresses, if supported by his sister's interest with her father, would occasion her a great deal of uneasiness; in addition to that part of her anxiety, she heard nothing from Lewisham, and from thence was certain he had never
received

received the letter she left for him at Bath; she felt his unhappiness on her account, as much as her own on his, but knew of no certain method to relieve either; she did all in her power to give him satisfaction, recollecting he had informed her he intended to stay sometime with his friend at Burton, she addressed a few lines to him there, but remained in doubt if they would ever reach his hand.

THERE is a progressive motion, so extremely gentle, which we sometimes fall into when the mind is otherwise engaged, that we are hardly sensible we move at all, till we awake as from a dream, on arriving at some particular spot, full of wonder how we came there, and look back with astonishment at the distance we have so imperceptibly measured step by step: it is exactly the same in many events of human life, we gain or lose a particular point by such gentle gradations, that when we survey the various trifles together, the accumulated mass is really surprizing.

Thus it happened at Mr. Westbury's; Harriet perceived the captain's assiduity increase; and Mrs. Westbury evidently favoured him with every opportunity of entertaining her; Mr. Westbury scarce thought of his daughter, but became slavishly devoted to his wife; he made her slightest request a law, not only for the regulation of himself, but his whole family, and her sway began to use much of its original moderation. Miss Westbury had hitherto found herself exempt from the lady's rules, but she dreaded every moment her good fortune would forsake her; a cold complaisance had succeeded the first friendliness of Mrs. Westbury's behaviour, and without any visible reason, she was now continually reserved, and yet all this had taken place by such imperceptible degrees, that it was absolutely impossible to form a complaint on any particular part: Harriet's situation on the whole, was extremely unpleasant, without her being able to say it was occasioned by this or that circumstance, or began to be so at this or that particular

particular time: she knew her father's hobby-horse, he must have some one to be fond of, a sort of play-thing, by which he was content to be governed, if they had address enough to make use of their power, without directly telling him they did so. His first wife long filled this consequential station, Harriet succeeded her, and they had both employed their influence for the general benefit of every one concerned: but the case was now altered; he had transformed this dangerous power to the hands of a woman, incapable of making a proper use of it, yet one who chose to use it incessantly. Mr. Westbury was persuaded his wife could do no wrong, and Harriet knew, while such was his opinion, it would be impossible to convince him of the contrary: his behaviour as to herself, was only negligent; he was liberal as to her pecuniary wants, nor as yet subjected her to the least restraint; of what then could she complain? If she said, she was not happy, it might be answered, who can help it.— Happiness is seated in the mind, and to think

think so, is of course to be so, if, on the other hand, discontent is encouraged, who shall undertake to administer relief.

CHAP. X.

MR. and Mrs. Westbury were frequently abroad, and saw a great deal of company at home. Harriet, at first was in all their parties, but Mrs. Westbury loved flattery and admiration, and very soon grew tired of a companion mistress of so many attractions; a daughter-in-law, a woman in appearance, and handsome, was in itself mortifying enough, exclusive of which, the extreme propriety of her carriage, and manners, contrasted with her own alluring levity, gave rise to comparisons by no means in her favour. Harriet soon found she must visit alone, or reside entirely at home, both of which were exceedingly disagreeable;

agreeable; when abroad, the fulsome adulation which every insignificant coxcomb thought proper to offer her, was disgusting to a degree; and, when at home, the particular assiduity of Captain Claverly was no less embarrassing. Added to all this, not a syllable had she heard of Mr. Lewisham; this was her greatest grief, every thing else she thought bearable, but their mutual ignorance of each other gave her exquisite uneasiness. She doubted not of this, as her opinion of his sincerity would not permit her to suppose he could know where she was, without informing her of it. She did him but justice in her supposition, but as Mr. Lewisham is really a very great favourite of ours, we must endeavour to clear his conduct to our friends as well as ourselves; in order to which we must bring in an old, and introduce a new acquaintance, two persons of great consequence in the family of Mr. Westbury. These are no other than Mrs. Betty and Mrs. Jenny, the confidential maids of the respective ladies. These important females

males had at first viewed each other with no very benign looks, but on recollecting their interests were entirely separate, they thought it quite as well to appear at least on a friendly footing. Soon after this patched up harmony commenced, Mrs. Jenny informed Mrs. Betty as a very great secret, her master and mistress designed Miss Westbury should marry Captain Claverly. Betty who well knew her mistress's heart, and took a lively part in Mr. Lewisham's interest, fired with resentment at the bare idea, and in the first heat of her anger, replied rather imprudently, with a pouting lip and turned-up nose, she fancied they would be out in their politics, for to her certain knowledge Miss Westbury would marry a man worth twenty of him. This reply was not perfectly intelligible to Mrs. Jenny, but Betty not chusing to say any more, she packed off with it to her mistress, and as it gained considerably in the re-telling, it was sufficient to alarm that lady exceedingly. Mrs. Westbury had her own reasons for wishing to dispose of

Harriet

Harriet to her nominal brother, and she had hitherto considered it as a very easy matter to effect; but the subject of this information was an obstacle she little expected, as she learned from thence Harriet had not only another, but a favoured lover, and one, if she might credit her informer, well deserving the partiality with which he was favoured. She hinted the matter in a distant manner to Mr. Westbury, but finding him quite ignorant of the meaning, she thought it most prudent to drop the subject, without going about to explain herself, as her apprehensions were considerably abated, when she found the father's sanction was not against her views. She concluded it would be best to conceal her suspicion, and watch every opportunity of obtaining, by accident, the necessary explanation. Dissimulation in general had, by long practice, become perfectly familiar to Mrs. Westbury, and she had arrived at the perfection of being one thing, and seeming another, with as much ease as most ladies.

But

But to return to Mr. Lewisham. He arrived at Bath in the evening as they left it in the morning; and the first thing he heard was Mr. Westbury's marriage, and departure for London with his family. His surprize and disappointment was beyond description. He had been detained two days at Burton, much against his inclination, by the friend whose invitation he had excepted, that he might the more conveniently see his adored Harriet. This gentleman was a clergyman whom he found confined to his room, in consequence of having been thrown from his horse a few days before. Mr. Lewisham, impatiently as he wished to see Miss Westbury, could not refuse waiting till the next day to officiate for his friend in giving the nuptial benediction to a lady and gentleman, who had just brought a licence from Bath for that purpose. The appearance of this couple insensibly engaged the attention of Mr. Lewisham. They were alone, the clerk was obliged to give the lady, and the gentleman did not receive her with
so

so much cordiality as gifts of this kind are usually received; nor did the lady seem much better pleased on the occasion, for while her lips vowed to love, honour, and obey, her eyes expressed envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. By these means he was detained all that day, and the next morning he was likewise engaged by the duties of his friend, and in the afternoon he flew on the wings of love to his Harriet, to press her fair hand to his lips, and breathe the unfeigned sincerity of his soul in her gentle ear, and then to find her gone in the moment when the highest pitch of his expectation was to be gratified by her long wished-for presence, was a shock all his resolution could hardly support. The cause of her removal was no less extraordinary, but a week before he had heard from Miss Westbury, who made no mention of any circumstance leading to a connexion of the kind. The few lines which had been deposited by Betty with the mistress of their lodging, were unfortunately abroad with that lady,

lady, by which means he was deprived of the slightest explanation.

IN the first moment of his disappointment, he was half inclined to join the witlings of the age, and rail heartily at the faithless female, who could so wantonly trifle with his peace; but the well known goodness, and generosity of his Harriet, closed his half-opened lips: he could only lament, he dared not reproach her, he was conscious she could not deserve it. In this disposition of mind he returned to Burton, flattering himself the mystery would somehow be revealed, in a short time, though he at present found it altogether inexplicable. He waited with impatience and anxiety, till at length the letter, which Harriet had sent at a venture, fortunately arrived, and quieted his contending passions by the wished-for information. He answered it immediately, and his sentiments springing from the fullness of his heart, he wrote what he felt. No man practised a truer charity than Lewisham, but favourably

avourably as he was inclined to interpret public reports, he could not avoid communicating some hints of the prevailing opinion at Bath, relative to her father's connexion. This letter Mrs. Westbury intercepted, she was too good to encourage the undutifulness of a daughter, and believing the correspondence to be a clandestine one, she thought it but right to put a stop to it. With this view she was carrying the letter in question to Mr. Westbury, but, on reflection, thought it most prudent to inform herself of its contents first, and decide on the use she should make of it afterwards. Mrs. Westbury was well read in the mysteries of the cabala, and made use of a charm which instantly overcame the red dragon placed to guard the writing. In other words, she broke the seal, and thought herself lucky that she did so, for that part of its contents, which concerned herself, was highly improper for the eye of Mr. Westbury; the letter was not so explicit as she wished, it bore the Bristol post-mark, and was only signed with a single L. so
that

that she still remained perfectly ignorant of the name, quality and residence of the writer. All that she could do therefore with her dishonourable acquisition, was to suppress it, and by that means break off a correspondence so inimical to her designs. This was the true cause of Harriet's unhappiness from the silence of her lover, and this was the reason of Mrs. Westbury's coldness and reserve, which we before took notice of.

Mrs. WESTBURY began to conceive all her cunning would be necessary for conducting her grand scheme, in the manner she wished; but her head was naturally turned to plotting, and if one design did not succeed, she trusted another would. Her first idea was, that Harriet, young and unexperienced, would be unable to guard her heart against the attack of a handsome young fellow, when continually exposed to his flattery and addresses; but finding, contrary to her expectation, her heart was already engaged, it became necessary to hasten the perfection

tion of her favourite plan, and proceed in another manner.

MRS. WESTBURY argued like a sound lawyer, well acquainted with the cause she had taken in hand, and I must, said she, make a breach between Harriet and her lover, which I shall easily effect by intercepting his letters; her gentle heart is like wax, which when I have properly softened by suspense and disappointment, will readily take the impression I wish, the captain will then stand the best chance in the world; he is handsome, and artful, and if that is not sufficient to procure him success, I must assist him, and by making her present situation as disagreeable as possible, force her to seek an asylum in his arms; a runaway match will be most pleasing to me, as that will fairly rid me of two people I am sick of; but if she persists in her ridiculous prudence, I must manage her father accordingly; at any rate she must be disposed of, and the captain shall have her, if it is only to be revenged on her babbling fool
for

for troubling his head with what did not concern him ; the girl's gravity and affectation is intolerable, and tires me with its sameness. In a word, she is a kind of restraint which must be removed ; I will humour them by fair means a little longer, but if it does not succeed, I shall throw off the mask, and convince them I am neither to be trifled with, or contradicted.

Do not let me lead my friends into an error with respect to the person this conversation was addressed to, it was neither Mr. Westbury nor his daughter, nor was it Captain Claverly, it was an address privately delivered by Mrs. Westbury from her head to her heart, a sort of soliloquy, in which she was led to relieve her overcharged imagination.

C H A P. XI.

WE have before observed Mr. and Mrs. Westbury saw a great deal of company; Harriet, though she seldom went out, was always present at the parties at home, amongst the foremost of their fashionable visitors, was a lady Cary, who paid an uncommon degree of attention to the person and conversation of Miss Westbury.

ONE evening Mrs. Westbury's rooms were entirely filled by a crowd of gay people met together for the express purpose of seeing and being seen; when Lady Cary entered, Harriet was sitting on a sofa, her head reclined on her hand in a very melancholy attitude, while the gay captain, leaning at her elbow, was breathing soft nonsense in her averted ear, Lady Cary observing Miss Westbury's dejection, approached her, and requested part of her seat, Harriet gladly complied, and

and gave her ladyship the side next to the captain.

LADY CARY was Harriet's great favourite, perhaps for the reason before given, the having been much distinguished by her; however, her Ladyship was a woman of real fashion, sensible and polite, elegant in her person, and pleasing in her manners, she was near fifty years of age, but her cheerfulness and affability not in the least impaired; they chatted some time on common-place subjects, till her Ladyship was about to retire, when taking the hand of Harriet, and looking steadily in her face, "sweet girl," said she, "you don't seem happy, I wish, my dear Miss Westbury, I could prevail on you to visit me."

HARRIET'S feelings were perfectly in unison with the pathetic tenor of this address, and a tear, spite of her endeavours to suppress it, stole gently down her cheek, "your Ladyship," replied she,

she, "offers me an honour I shall be particularly happy to accept."—"Well, then," said Lady Cary, "to convince me you do not flatter, I shall expect you will call on me early to-morrow morning." Harriet courted assent, her Ladyship withdrew, and Miss Westbury finding company disagreeable, complained of a head-ach, and retired to her chamber.

HARRIET had been particularly unhappy all this day; her anxiety and suspense about Mr. Lewisham was sufficiently distressing of itself, and a little affair which had happened in the morning, alarmed her exceedingly on another score; the captain proposed walking in the Park, Mr. Westbury had letters to write, but requested he might not prevent his accompanying the ladies, and the motion was accordingly agreed to.

In the Mall they were met by two gentlemen, who stopped and surveyed Miss Westbury with infinitely more free-

dom than politeness; she blushed, and turned her face towards the canal, when one immediately enquired of the other, what had caught his attention, "why," replied he, "is not that hero in the cockade your quondam friend and servant "Jack Claverly?" "yes," answered the first, "and the tallest of the females is my "quondam friend and servant Fanny "Baily;" "I thought so," returned the other, "but who the devil is that beautiful girl they have got with them? A "blushing beauty too is rather a *rara avis* "in such society?" "oh, as to that," replied the first, "Jack I suppose is only "labouring in his old vocation."

ALL this Harriet very distinctly heard, while she seemed to be surveying the distant side of the Park; Mrs. Westbury and the captain were rather before her, and they were so earnestly debating the fashion of a sword-knot, that they heard nothing of the late conversation, nor observed the parties who carried it on; unable to settle their dispute, they interrupted

rupted Harriet's reverie by asking her opinion, but she waved the decision of so important a point, by declaring herself an incompetent judge: she complained of being fatigued, and begged to return home, which they immediately agreed to.

WHEN Miss Westbury retired to dress, the conversation of the gentlemen was uppermost in her thoughts; but the more she reflected on it, the more she was embarrassed; in the captain's name she was certain there could be no mistake; her mother's name was indeed Fanny, but Baily she had never heard of; in the regiment the captain pretended he belonged to, there certainly was a captain Claverly, and it was but fair to conclude he might as well be the person he pretended to be, as the one they described him; it was indeed strange she heard of no relation or connexion, but it might arise from a domestic animosity, family division, or twenty other causes not easily accounted for; so concluding her apprehensions must be founded on a mistake, she

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intended

intended to think no more of it, but rang the bell for her attendant, and began the business of the toilet.

C H A P. XII.

BETTY found her mistress very low spirited, and with a view of amusing her, talked of a hundred ridiculous things, but all to no purpose; she then mentioned Mr. Lewisham, but having nothing satisfactory to say concerning him, the subject produced more pain than pleasure; suddenly recollecting herself, she thought she had got something to say, which her mistress would think ridiculous at least; this was the information she had received some time before from Mrs. Jenny, of the projected match with captain Claverly, but she could not have touched a more unfortunate chord, for Harriet was inclined to fear it contained

too much truth; the Park conversation again rushed into her mind, and the idea of being forced to marry a man, who possibly was the very person there described, was shocking to think of; at best, how very different was he from Mr. Lewisham; she did not think of marrying Mr. Lewisham, but she dreaded the idea of marrying any other person; she reflected on these disagreeable circumstances, till they produced the melancholy and dejection, which was so tenderly diverted by the obliging Lady Cary in the manner we have before mentioned.

THE next morning, Miss Westbury complied with her ladyship's invitation; she was received with affectionate politeness, and treated with a tenderness she had been lately unused to. Harriet sighed, and could scarce restrain her tears; there was something in the manner of Lady Cary so extremely like her beloved, much lamented mother, that the wounds in her bosom bled afresh at the remembrance

brance of her loss, from which she justly dated the beginning of her misfortunes. Lady Cary saw the grief she endeavoured to conceal, and gently enquired the cause; Harriet confessed the nature of her feelings, and regretted the death of her amiable mother, in terms, so moving and affectionate, that her ladyship's friendly bosom participated her distress, she took the sweet girl in her arms, and mingled her tears plentifully with those of her young friend; Harriet dried her eyes, and apologized for grieving her ladyship with the cause of her unhappiness; "but indeed, my dear madam," said she, "it is long since I experienced
"so much obliging sympathy, and your
"goodness inspires me with a confidence,
"such as I used to feel when conversing
"with the mother I can now only lament."
Lady Cary soothed her with every affectionate argument in her power, and having chatted with her till near dinner time, she permitted her to depart for Berkeley-Square.

RETURN-

RETURNING from her ladyship's apartment, who should she meet with in the hall, but the gentleman whose observations in the Park had given her so much uneasiness; she was extremely surprized to meet him there, nor did the gentleman seem less astonished at the rencontre; but as she was leaving the house when he entered it, he could only offer her his hand to place her in her chair. Miss Westbury was perfectly charmed with the affectionate reception she had met with, and finding none of the family at home, she very much regretted that she had not accepted Lady Cary's invitation to dinner; however next morning, a card was delivered, containing Lady Cary's compliments to Mr. and Mrs. Westbury, and requesting their permission for Miss Westbury's spending a few days with her in Harley-street. Her ladyship was very well known, and as well respected, and of course as nothing could be offered against the desired permission, it was granted with all due acknowledgment for the honour her ladyship did them in the

the person of their daughter. Harriet's heart danced in her breast at the welcome tidings; she flew into Harley-street, and kissed her ladyship's hand, while she wet it with tears of gratitude and joy; the worthy woman was greatly affected by the lively expressions of her feelings: "It is a great pity, my dear girl," said she, "your amiable spirits should ever be depressed." "Your ladyship's goodness," replied Harriet, "will soon raise them above their common pitch; indeed, my dear madam, if you are so very indulgent, I fear I shall not restrain them in any tolerable bounds." "Do not attempt it, my dear," said Lady Cary, "give your vivacity full play, you are too amiable to need any restraint. Your name I think is Harriet, shall I call you Harriet? why were you called Harriet?" "My mother, madam, was called Harriet, and God grant with her name, I may inherit her virtue, and her prudence." "The wish, my dear Harriet, does you infinite honour," replied Lady Cary, "and

“and if I may venture to pronounce, is
“in a great measure already granted ;
“but it is time to dress, you must come
“and chat with me in my dressing
“room.”

C H A P. XIII.

MISS WESTBURY followed Lady Cary up stairs, and while her hair was dressing, Harriet's attention was wholly engaged by the portraits of a lady and gentleman, which ornamented one side of the apartment: when the servant retired,—“ You seem much taken with these pictures, Harriet,” said Lady Cary, “ are you an admirer of paintings? “ Not in general Madam,” said she, “ but I am exceedingly pleased “ with those two; I could almost persuade myself I am amongst my own “ friends, this picture is so extremely

"like my mother! But, that," replied her ladyship, "is the picture of my mother. Don't you think it like me? Is this the picture of your mother, Harriet?" (continued she looking at the miniature of Miss Westbury's bracelet) "and is it called a good likeness?" "It is my mother's, madam," said Harriet, "but not a good likeness; it was done from a portrait after her death!" "Your mother must have been very handsome," said Lady Cary; I think I have the picture of a much-valued friend very like her," taking a miniature from her watch, "what is your opinion, Miss Westbury?" Harriet surveyed it with admiration, "Your Ladyship is perfectly right," said she; "the faces are indeed perfectly alike, but yours is by far the best painting, and, I dare say, the best likeness: and I am sure it is infinitely more like my mother than mine is."

LADY CARY replaced the picture, and remained some moments silent; at length,
"Had

"Had your mother any near relations, Miss Westbury?"

"NONE, Madam, that I was ever happy enough to know," replied Harriet.

HER Ladyship was again silent. "Did you ever hear her mention a Mr. Bland, my dear?" said she.

"YES, Madam, very frequently," replied Harriet.

"WHAT have you heard her say of him?" said Lady Cary with visible confusion. Harriet replied, "I am exceedingly alarmed by your Ladyship's conversation; from whence, my dear Madam, can all these questions proceed?"

LADY CARY replied, with evident emotion, "Be assured, my dear Harriet, they arise not from impertinent, or unmeaning curiosity! I admire your delicacy and caution, but I have particular

“ ticular reasons for wishing you to answer
 “ me explicitly on this subject; you
 “ must, my dear girl, speak to me with
 “ confidence. Perhaps I am already ac-
 “ quainted with the circumstances you
 “ wish to conceal !”

“ Your Ladyship shall be obeyed,”
 said Harriet. “ My mother always men-
 “ tioned Mr. Bland as a bad man, and
 “ spoke of him with more severity than
 “ of any other person; for, to his un-
 “ manly and dishonourable wiles, she
 “ imputed the loss of an only, affection-
 “ ate, and amiable sister: a sister, whose
 “ remembrance filled her eyes with tears,
 “ and whose unhappiness she lamented
 “ to the day of her death.”

LADY CARY trembled, and could hard-
 ly support herself. She reclined on Miss
 Westbury's shoulder, and the tears rolled
 down her cheek, whilst the lovely girl
 sat silent with astonishment, wondering
 what would be the end of a scene so un-
 accountable. Her Ladyship, tenderly
 fixing

fixing her eyes on Miss Westbury's agitated countenance, "Your mother, my "dear girl," said she, "was an angel; "and well have you described the goodness of her heart. Mr. Bland was "afterwards Lord Cary, the same whose "title I now bear; and in Lady Cary, "my dear Harriet, the Lady Cary now "made happy by embracing you, you "behold the long-lost sister of your "amiable mother!—the sister, whose "loss she so tenderly deplored!"

MISS WESTBURY'S spirits had before been stretched to their utmost, and this was a conclusion she little expected; hope, doubt, and joy, rushing at once on her disordered imagination, bore down her remaining strength, and she fell in the arms of her affectionate aunt!

A few minutes restored her to herself, when looking at Lady Cary, in a manner strongly expressive of her various feelings, "Good Heavens!" said she, "is it "possible I can be so happy? or is it, "my

“my dear Madam, only the illusion of
 “a dream? Did you not say you was
 “my friend, my relation, my mother’s
 “dearly-beloved sister?”

“Yes, my sweet girl,” said her Ladyship, “all this is true, but endeavour
 “to compose your agitation, my love;
 “I am indeed your friend, the friend of
 “your virtues; I am your relation, and
 “I will be your mother; satisfy your-
 “self of my sincerity, and give a loose
 “to the fulness of your heart. You are
 “too much agitated to hear more on
 “the subject at present. Recall your spi-
 “rits; it is near dinner time.—To-mor-
 “row I will explain the circumstances
 “relative to myself, which you are unac-
 “quainted with.”

HARRIET was obliged to acquiesce, though her curiosity was so highly excited; lady Cary was all attention and politeness, she chatted with her on a variety of unimportant matters, with a pleasing vivacity, gave her a miniature
 of

of herself richly ornamented, and in short, every part of the good lady's behaviour, was evidently calculated to re-establish her young friends serenity; in the evening she carried her to the Opera, where they were joined by the gentleman before mentioned, of park memory, and Lady Cary introduced him to her niece, as Sir W. Burt. Sir William's behaviour was particularly distressing to Miss Westbury, she could not forget what she had heard in the Mall, or the light in which he then seemed to consider her, and now he was so very attentive, and regarded her with such evident partiality, that she equally disliked it, and heartily wished herself relieved of his company.

SIR WILLIAM was not used to inspire any such sentiments, he was a young baronet of very good estate, handsome in his person, and polite in his address; and therefore the ladies generally thought him an object deserving of every decent encouragement; many snares had been laid for his heart, by the fair, the black, and

and the brown, but conscious that his fortune, and title, procured him more than half the distinctions he received, he had sense enough not to be vain of them.

ON his first meeting Miss Westbury in the Park, her figure engaged his attention, but from his knowledge of her companions, the impression was not of a serious kind; when he met her taking leave at Lady Cary's, his admiration returned, and he enquired after her with an earnestness, which did not escape the penetration of that lady; she informed him, that she was a young lady of character and fortune, and a relation of her's; he said nothing of the suspicious circumstances attending his first seeing her, but observed she thought her extremely beautiful; her ladyship replied, she certainly was handsome, nor in her opinion was she less amiable, which was all that then passed on the subject.

SIR WILLIAM was a favourite of Lady Cary's; she knew he was a gay, but believed

lieved he might be called a good young man, that is, he shared the follies and dissipations of the town, without slavishly submitting to be governed by them, and his morals remained unimpeached, while his manners appeared light; he had ever been a dutiful and affectionate son, which her ladyship looked on as the most promising basis in the world, for his becoming a good husband; all these circumstances duly considered, she was not displeased with his solicitude about Miss Westbury, on the contrary, if their sentiments could be brought to correspond, she knew of nothing that could be offered in opposition to their mutual happiness.

BUT as all this was matter spontaneously produced in the breast of Lady Cary, we certainly have no business to leave her waiting for her carriage at the Opera, while we are retailing private sentiments, and confidential conversation; having therefore dismissed Sir William, and conducted the ladies home, we shall leave them

them to their repose till the next morning; the usual compliments, and the breakfast over, Harriet reminded her aunt how much she had suffered from her curiosity, in consequence of her complaisance the day before, and begged she would no longer defer indulging her with a knowledge of her reason, for having so long and carefully concealed herself; her ladyship accordingly gave her the desired information in the following terms:

CHAP. XIV.

YOU must have heard, my dear Harriet, how we lost our father, and how soon our grief was augmented, by the death of our valuable mother; we were left orphans without provision, or a friend, from whom we could expect the least assistance; I had long received the addresses of Mr. Bland, he flew to us on
the

the first knowledge of our distress, and administered all the consolation in his power; he was indefatigable in settling our affairs, and left nothing unsaid, or undone, which could any-ways tend to soften and alleviate our afflictions.

THE mind is never so grateful as when depressed by grief; Mr. Bland's tenderness and assiduity, had a very sensible effect on mine; he saw it, and laid his design accordingly.

ONE day, as I was expressing my sense of his obliging behaviour, he replied, "you do but little justice to my feelings, my dear Amelia, while you take such notice of the trifling service I do you, I should be happy if my present power was adequate to my wishes, I would then instantly convince you how highly I prize your happiness, but that is not the case." He then proceeded to tell me a plausible tale of domestic obligations, and family views, how little he was master of his own actions, and how much

much his fortune would suffer by his marrying at that period; of his great expectation from Lord Cary, and other distant branches of his family, and summed up the whole by intreating me to accept his hand in private.

I WAS at first exceedingly shocked at the idea; a private marriage appeared dreadful, but he was prepared on the subject, and placed the matter in so many points of view, and advanced so many reasons in favour of his proposal, that my resolution began to give way; he then again applied to my affection, recapitulated all he had before said, of the affairs of his family, but offered to sacrifice them all to me, if I persisted in refusing to accept his hand in the manner he requested.

WHAT could I do? I loved him, and believed him! I had no reason to doubt the truth of what he asserted; how then could I think, in return for his disinterested affection, of injuring his fortune, and
ruining

ruining his hopes? on the other hand, if I refused him intirely, I had no dependence left for my self, and my beloved sister; I was then but eighteen, Harriet not seventeen, and surely my situation was a very difficult one, what shall I say, my dear; influenced on one side by a tender passion, and the fear of indigence on the other, I consented to all he wished. He presented me with a settlement of five hundred a year, and our marriage was to be conducted by his direction, in the most private manner possible, and I solemnly promised never to confess it to any person, or on any occasion, till I had his permission so to do.

My ignorance, and innocence only could have blinded me to the unfairness of his conduct, but I had no suspicion, my own heart was free from deceit and guile, and I looked on all mankind to be the same; uninclined to deceive, I feared no deception from any person, much less from the man whom I considered as my guardian angel, who sought
me

me in my distress, consoled me in my affliction, and in my sad reverse of fortune, crowned his generosity by making me his wife.

How very different from mine Harriet, was the conduct of your mother; indigence had appeared to me in the most terrible shape, but when I imparted to her what I thought my good fortune, she looked at me with fixed attention. Mr. Bland, said she, is liberal indeed, but pray Amelia, on what terms are you to accept these proofs of his liberality? My countenance betrayed evident confusion; I dared not confess the truth; nor could I frame a falsehood; my hesitation confirmed her suspicion; and can you Amelia, said she, can you sacrifice yourself for this paltry consideration? ah! how soon will you regret your ill-placed confidence? I assured her she was mistaken, that she wronged me in her opinion, that she would soon be convinced how innocent I was, and how very far from deserving her injurious suspicion; but

but all to no purpose, she was inflexible, nothing would satisfy her, but my withdrawing myself entirely from Mr. Bland, and that was impossible; in vain I invited her to share my fortune, she would not hear of it, I pressed her to accept the most trifling independence just to support her, but she scorned alike me and my offers; she dared the utmost malice of her ill-fortune, but she dared not attempt to evade it, by dishonourable means.

I WAS piqued by her obstinacy, and reproached her with want of confidence, and a breach ensued, the first we had ever experienced, which terminated in her separating herself entirely from me, and retiring to the house of a woman who had been her nurse; where her virtue soon met its reward, in a union with your father.

MR. BLAND shortly after removed me to London, I had elegant lodgings, a carriage and servants, and my husband being a great deal with me, I was perfectly happy; I lived indeed extremely private,

vate, but not disagreeably so, as my disposition was naturally retired; Mr. Bland's behaviour continued that of the most affectionate husband, studious to anticipate my wishes, by his attention.

THE people of the house had a young lady residing with them, a niece, the orphan daughter of a clergyman; Charlotte Leigh was then about sixteen, very little of her age, but very pretty; she had a great flow of spirits and vivacity, and frequently when I was alone, I requested her company, till by degrees I became so much attached to her, that she might be said to live with me entirely.

CHARLOTTE loved dress and public amusements, but her fortune was insufficient for procuring either in the manner she wished; I supported her expences abroad, for the sake of her company, and the presents I made her, joined to her own little income, enabled her to appear quite to her own taste.

Two

Two years I had lived thus calm and undisturbed, and my husband's affection seemed continually increasing, when all at once Charlotte was missing, and no where to be heard of, I had some time observed an alteration in her spirits and complexion; she grew pale, lost her vivacity, and avoided company, but as she continually complained of the head-ach, I readily supposed that to be the cause; she had gone out in the morning under pretence of purchasing something for me, and never returned; we were all exceedingly alarmed in the evening, and dispatched messengers to various parts of the town, but to no purpose, not the least information could we obtain, having for a month tried all possible means for her recovery without effect, we were obliged to give up the search, and every one accounted for her absence in a different manner.

Just at this period, the nephew of Lord Cary was lost on his passage from
VOL. I. H Ireland,

Ireland, and Mr. Bland stood immediate heir to the title.

THE old Lord was exceedingly infirm, and not likely to live many years; at his death my restraint was to cease, and I was then to be publicly acknowledged Lord Cary's wife; I had hitherto been perfectly happy, and looked on the matter with great indifference, but now the arrival of Lord Cary in London obliged Mr. Bland to be frequently absent, and having lost Charlotte, I was left very much alone, so that I began to wish for a change in my situation; but I was governed by circumstances which I thought it my duty to submit to, Mr. Bland's engagements abroad had so gradually increased, that I sometimes hardly saw him for a week, but I was still contented, his pretences were plausible, and I entertained not the least suspicion.

C H A P. XV.

ONE morning I had been walking in the Park, and returning up St. James's Street, I lost the bow of my slipper, I entered a milliner's just by to get another, and while the woman was tying it up, I amused myself with looking over some things which were lying before me, when the mistress asked if the cap was put up for Mrs. Bland?

I ENQUIRED what Mrs. Bland it was she spoke of? She replied, Mrs. Bland of Bond-street, and immediately after a servant entered, with a beautiful little boy in his hand, and enquired for the parcel for his mistress.

THERE was something in the appearance of the child which struck me instantly, I enquired his name, he told me Edward Bland, he was almost four years old, and his mamma lived in Bond-street.

I KISSED the charming prattler over and over: I was no longer unable to account for the loss of my friend Charlotte, as the sweet boy's countenance strongly expressed every line of her face, and his age perfectly tallied with the time of her departure.

WHEN I drew out my purse to pay for the ribbon, the little fellow was highly delighted with its finery, and seemed very desirous of obtaining it; I indulged a whimsical idea, and presented him with the purse, together with a small Portuguese gold coin, requesting him to shew them both to his mamma. The purse was a piece of embroidery which I had received as a present from Charlotte, the work of her own hand, and the money a small coin, through which she one day, playfully made a hole, for the purpose of fixing it round the neck of a favourite little dog, and were both too remarkable to pass unnoticed by her.

I RETURNED

I RETURNED home full of the late scene, and began to reflect on circumstances, which I had never before thought of. The agitation of my mind produced a slight fever, for which I had recourse to the assistance of a neighbouring physician. Happening one day when he was present, accidentally to name Lord Cary, I was surprized to hear from him, that nobleman was not in London, nor had been for many years; that he was very old and infirm, and that he had been long incapable of leaving his chamber.

I SAID nothing, but I confess, thought a great deal, and the conduct of my husband appeared in a very unfavourable light; a thousand things all at once crowded my imagination; Mr. Bland's pretended engagement with Lord Cary commenced just at the time of Charlotte's departure, and I doubted not, but his almost continual absence from me, was occasioned by the continuance of his attachment to her. Mr. Bland loved children, and had frequently lamented

our wanting the sweet pledges of conubial affection. Charlotte was amiable, and the mother of a lovely boy, which must render her infinitely the more dear to him: my extreme retired mode of life, was the thing in the world most favourable to his practices; I saw no company, of course could have no opportunity to detect the fallacies of his pretended affairs; my disposition was naturally unsuspicious, and I loved him too well to suppose him capable of deceit, till I was convinced he had deceived me by facts past contradiction.

THE folly and inefficacy of my marriage, now stared me in the face; the sanction was sufficient to satisfy the undoubting mind, but I had no proof of it; we were married privately, two gentlemen only were present, he called them his friends, but of them I knew nothing, nor of the clergyman employed in performing the sacred ceremony. I had trusted implicitly to his honour and affection. Alas! an accident unveiled the imposition,

imposition, he had outlived his affection; and honour he never had.

I PASSED a week in this kind of agitated insipience, reviewing various plans for my future pursuit, but unable to fix on any. Mr. Bland had rendered himself unworthy my esteem, but he still possessed my heart, and I was unwilling to give him up; yet to live with him under those circumstances was impossible; my conduct had certainly merited a different return; I had sacrificed myself to his pretended interest, by a mode of life most women would have found insupportable; conscious of having acted agreeable to his wishes, I had been happy in his approbation, but now the cause of that approbation appeared in such guilty colours, I could be happy no longer: to upbraid him with his double duplicity, would be useless; it was most likely he would deny the charge, and if he chose to do so, I had no proof to offer in support of my accusation. I now experienced the truth of Harriet's prophecy, and heartily repented

pented of my ill placed confidence, but it was too late ; I wished in vain to recall my imprudent condescension, and after various consultations with myself, I concluded the most prudent method would be, to withdraw myself into the country entirely from Mr. Bland, but to avoid coming to an explanation if possible.

WITH this intent I proceeded to arrange my little affairs, and waited with impatience for a visit from my deceitful husband ; when he came, I took occasion to observe I thought my health suffered by my sedentary mode of life, and very civilly requested his permission to spend the summer at Buxton ; the request was approved of, and recommended as the most eligible plan I could possibly have formed, and he affected to regret the unlucky engagements which prevented his attending me.

I DEPARTED for Derbyshire, but left a letter for Mr. Bland, giving him slightly to understand, I was not ignorant of his imposition,

imposition, both with respect to Charlotte, and his pretended engagements with Lord Cary; observing at last, that my own situation had been exceedingly uncomfortable, and that I wished not to be recalled to London, till his inclination and circumstances joined in permitting him to receive me in the manner I expected.

I soon after received a short answer, that I seemed to entertain a very odd set of ideas, but that he loved me too well, to think of restraining my inclination; he begged me to consider myself entirely my own mistress, as he was conscious from the extreme propriety of the past, no part of my future conduct could ever incur his censure.

I IMMEDIATELY prepared for fixing my residence, and not chusing to live entirely alone, I was received as a boarder in the family of a clergyman; I retained my chariot, maid, and footman, and in this situation I experienced all the happiness.

pineness the uncertainty of my circumstances would admit of; Mr. Brooks was a sensible, worthy man, his wife, an amiable woman, and their two daughters, agreeable good natured girls.

WITH these good people I spent most of my time, and for society, visited with them among the neighbouring families, where I was received as a lady of fortune, whose husband was abroad.

I REMAINED several years in this tranquil abode, ardently longing to see your mother, but till my suspicious circumstances were cleared up, not daring to attempt it; I enquired after her every opportunity, and at times received some little information. I heard of your birth, and the joy occasioned by it, and that she was well and happy; so far I was satisfied, I heard likewise of Lord Cary's death, but I still heard nothing of my husband.

C H A P. XVI.

ONE evening as we were at tea in an alcove in the garden, a carriage drove up to the gate, and a servant enquired for Lady Cary, he was answered, no such person lived there, nor was the name known in that part of the country; I heard the enquiry, and desired I might speak with the person who made it, and a gentleman was accordingly introduced, who I instantly recollected to be one of the friends before-mentioned, as present at the time of my marriage with Mr. Bland.

His appearance surprized me much, "I believe Sir," said I, "your business must be with me," "It certainly is with you madam," he replied, "and I am sorry to come the messenger of ill-news, but in compliance with the dying request of my friend,

"friend, I come to inform your Ladyship, Lord Cary is no more." "I heard Sir," said I, "of Lord Cary's death, a great while ago, but will you be good enough to inform me how it relates to me?"

"I perceive," replied he, "a similarity of name leads your ladyship into a mistake, Lord Cary died but yesterday morning, and I left town immediately to bring you the information, together with this packet, which I was enjoined to deliver into your hand; Mr. Bland, your ladyship's husband, is the Lord Cary of whom I speak."

"Good God," said I, "is Mr. Bland really dead? and do you come from him in the manner you describe? Why did he not send earlier? Why was I not permitted to see him?"

"My friend, madam," replied he, "sensible of the unmerited ill-treatment you have received, could not support
" your

"your presence ; he knew the goodness
"of your heart, but knowing likewise,
"how much he had abused it, it was
"that only which he feared ; had you
"been less amiable, had you opposed,
"instead of patiently resigning yourself
"to his injustice, his own reproaches
"had been less severe."

He then informed me, that Lord Cary had, by frequent excesses, very much impaired and weakened his constitution ; that a few evenings before, in the hour of riot, the name of some lady had been accidentally introduced, of whom Lord Cary took occasion to say a number of free things, which one of the company thought proper to resent ; they were both exceedingly intoxicated, and a quarrel ensued, immediate recourse was had to their swords, and before their friends were able to interfere, Lord Cary received a wound in his side, which in two days ended his existence ; that from the moment he recovered his senses, after the dreadful accident, he had talk-
ed

ed incessantly of me, and recapitulated his unworthy treatment of me to all his surrounding friends; he had been continually attended by the divine who joined our hands, and himself, and had never ceased requesting they would do me justice, by publishing the uncommon propriety of my conduct, and that above all, he should particularly inform me of the circumstances attending his death, in order to erase every impression of tenderness, in prejudice to my own quiet.

WHAT a tale, my dear Harriet, was this, for the ear of a wife? Good Heaven! that a man designed to do honour to his creator, should so live and so die, to rush uncalled into the presence of his tremendous judge, thus laden with complicated crimes! dreadful to think of! and must surely strike a terror on the imagination of the most daring libertine.

I felt all the affection I had ever experienced for my husband, return at the
recital

recital of his unfortunate end, I pitied his too tardy remorse, on his account, and sincerely forgave him every pang I had ever experienced from his conduct. I took leave of my worthy friends, and prepared to accompany Sir William Burt to London. Sir William treated me with every friendly attention, he offered me his house which I readily accepted, as I could not think of taking immediate possession of Lord Cary's.

LADY BURT is a most amiable woman, she received me with open arms, and her obliging behaviour at that period, gave rise to a friendship which has continued ever since.

The packet brought by Sir William, contained a letter written by Lord Cary, filled with reflections on the injustice of his conduct, and a very lively picture of his contrition, but seemed mostly intended to recommend to my care and affection, his son by my friend Charlotte. He informed

informed me his mother had been dead many years, that she fell a sacrifice to the small-pox, leaving her dear boy but five years old; that he had ever since been brought up by Mr. Bland, and was now at Oxford; he expressed himself under infinite obligations to his brother, for his friendship and consideration for his son; he gave me a very amiable character which he had heard of him, but confessed after the death of his mother, he had never paid him the least attention. He lamented pathetically the manner in which he had spent a life, lent him for nobler purposes, but earnestly solicited forgiveness of Heaven, and me.

By Lord Cary's will I found the son of the unfortunate Charlotte entitled to two thousand per annum, and myself to four, half of which was to remain at my disposal, and the other half to descend to Mr. Bland. The rest of his fortune went with the title

to

to his brother, now Lord Cary—Lord Cary is in Italy, and Mr. Bland I have never been able to hear of; I have made the most minute enquiry through the university, both personally and by various agents, but to no purpose. I can hear of no such person as Edward Bland, nor of any one placed there by Lord Cary; so that I am led to conclude the young man must have gone abroad with his uncle's family. I have written several letters to his Lordship, no answer has as yet arrived, but I am now in hourly expectation of his arrival in England. I very much wish to see the young gentleman, and shall ever consider myself as interested in his welfare, as my friendship for his mother was the first cause of his existence.

CHAP. XVII.

MY sister was now uppermost in my thoughts, and having gained the situation in which I wished to see her, I could no longer refrain doing it; but how very weak are human conclusions! Short-sighted mortals will be planning for themselves, and erecting castles to last for ever in their own airy imaginations, which the revolution of a moment reduces to nothing! In the height of expectation, when I almost persuaded myself I held her in my arms, and felt the pressure of her returned embrace, I heard of her death! I knew nothing of Mr. Westbury, nor how I could explain myself to him in a satisfactory manner, as all he could ever have heard of me must have been entirely to my disadvantage. Under these circumstances I could not think of appearing to you.

Just

JUST at this period, on the death of Sir William Burt, I accompanied his lady to Bath, where I soon after, with great pleasure heard of your arrival. I endeavoured to see you, and met you once at the Rooms; but I was so much affected by the lively resemblance of your mother, which I traced in every line of your countenance, that I was incapable of speaking to you as I intended, and from that time you lived so retired, I never met with you. I heard of your father's marriage, and departure for London; and I immediately followed, flattering myself I should be more successful. I met you at several places, but continually lost the opportunities, while I was deciding with myself how I should make use of them; while I remained thus irresolute as to the mode in which I should introduce myself, you again withdrew. I met Mrs. Westbury every where perpetually on the wing, in search of pleasures; she missed no place where there was a probability of finding

ing the delusive goddess, but you was never to be seen. I am no great admirer of Mrs. Westbury's conduct, I think she affects a lightness, not perfectly consistent with her situation, but I may be mistaken; however, I was under the necessity of sacrificing my prejudice to my convenience, and make use of her acquaintance, for procuring me the free access to you, which was necessary for gaining your confidence before I could proceed to the long-wished for explanation. I found no difficulty in the first part of my scheme, Mrs. Westbury's vanity favoured my purpose, my appearance and title were a recommendation to her, which surmounted every other consideration. I returned her complaisance, which was all she wanted, while my attention was directed to you. I saw the uneasiness of your situation through all your attempts to conceal it; but I need not repeat the manner in which I at last addressed you.

THUS,

Thus, my dear Harriet, have I informed you of the various reasons which severed me from the friendship and society of your mother, and indeed from society in general. I thought not of popular opinion, while engaged in the discharge of any duty, conformable to my circumstances; but when I found my heart's tenderest affection causelessly slighted, all my happiness vanished, and though I was content to live unknowing and unknown, without envying the freer inhabitants of the world, while I believed my husband's love and interest demanded it, yet the instant I was undeceived, it became insupportable.

HARRIET returned her aunt many thanks for the trouble she had taken for her gratification. Lady Cary then enquired who the lady was her father had married, and when he became acquainted with her; but Miss Westbury knew nothing of the matter, having neither seen, or heard of her more than twelve hours before

before she was her mother. Lady Cary thought the proceedings very singular, but observed, "At any rate, my dear Harriet, I am persuaded your situation is by no means an eligible one, if it will be agreeable to you, I will endeavour to obtain your father's permission for your residing with me. Mrs. Westbury, I make no doubt, will be perfectly happy in your removal." Miss Westbury was delighted with her aunt's friendly intentions, and continued to express the grateful overflowings of her heart, till Lady Cary replied, with an inquisitive smile, "I did not think, my dear, you would have given my proposals so hearty a reception, for if I am not greatly mistaken in my conjecture, when you come to live with me, you will leave a lover behind you." Harriet acknowledged the justice of her aunt's observation, but declared, that consideration alone was sufficient to render her ladyship's invitation desirable. She then proceeded to explain her ideas of the captain, what she

had

had heard, and what she suspected. Lady Cary replied, she could not suppose a man of Mr. Westbury's sense could entertain such a thought; that gentlemen of his age generally made a very material difference when they chose for themselves, and when they determined for their children; that though in the first they were sometimes led by folly, in the last they were frequently rather too much governed by what they call prudence, but which might, in fact, be properly enough termed a folly of another kind; a man of sixty would justify himself for marrying a girl of sixteen, though she possessed no other recommendation; yet would the same person think his son highly culpable, should he refuse to marry a woman of sixty, when he desires him so to do, merely because she is rich. "Therefore, my dear, though your father was content to marry the lady to please himself, I do not apprehend he will chuse you should marry the gentleman on any such terms; he will consult the prudential side of the question,

“question, in a connexion for you per-
“haps too much so.”

“I HAVE no reason, Madam,” said
Harriet, “to fear that my father, if
“left to himself, would ever attempt to
“exact my compliance on any occasion,
“but if my mother should prefer being
“my sister, I believe at present she has
“influence enough to effect it, in oppo-
“sition to every consideration, which
“my father might be naturally inclined
“to preserve for me.”

“My dear Harriet,” said Lady Cary,
“do not, Quixote like, convert wind-
“mills into giants, merely for the sake
“of enumerating them; your apprehen-
“sions are perhaps without foundation,
“and even should they not, the captain
“is, I think, handsome, at least he cer-
“tainly is not disagreeable, and on in-
“quiry may not prove an improper
“match: should that be the case, what
“good objection could you offer to your
“father's choice? I would by no means
“wish

“wish you unhappily united ; but I must
“confess the parents authority has a
“right to great influence.”

“My dear Lady Cary,” said Harriet,
“God forbid I should ever be under the
“disagreeable necessity of opposing my
“father’s authority ; but indeed captain
“Claverly is my aversion ; objections to
“him ! I have a thousand.—Believe me,
“madam, he is disagreeable to a degree ;
“your ladyship must excuse me, but I
“have lately seen so much of him, I
“have been so much left to his society,
“that I really cannot even think of him
“with patience ; how then am I to sit
“down and pass my life with such a man ?
“If intolerable as a companion for a
“few hours, what must he be for a hus-
“band ? I assure you, my dear aunt, I
“have thought a great deal on this sub-
“ject lately, I have had leisure for reflec-
“tion, and it has fell mostly on this
“head, as I have long feared Mrs.
“Westbury’s design ; I have turned the
“idea over and over, have viewed it in
Vol. I. I “every

“every point, and in every direction,
“without being able to discover a single
“avenue through which a hope of satis-
“faction can enter : I am very sensible
“how much my father is entitled to
“expect from my duty, but is it neces-
“sary, my dear madam, that to please
“him in one particular instance, I should
“make myself miserable for life ? Can
“I please him in reality by so doing, for
“when he sees the dreadful effects of
“my obedience, when he hourly hears
“his commands have made me wretched,
“will not he hourly repent his having
“done so ? will he not wish he had used
“his authority with more moderation ?
“Therefore, while my eyes are thus open
“to the consequence, would not my
“compliance be wilfully planting unhap-
“piness in my own breast, and remorse
“in his.”

LADY CARY requested Miss Westbury would not dwell on a theme which gave her so much uneasiness, and professed a hope, the difficulty was but imaginary,

at

at any rate, advised her to retire from, rather than advance to meet, every thing which bore an unpleasant appearance.

CHAP. XVI.

HARRIET remained at Lady Cary's several days, during which time, in speaking of the little transactions of Westbury-house, she had frequent occasion to mention Mr. Lewisham; her ladyship at last noticed it, and enquired who Mr. Lewisham was, whose name she so frequently heard; this was throwing Harriet off her guard, by leading her to the subject next her heart, and she entered on it with infinite delight; she spoke of him in terms so lively and pathetic, that she fairly lost herself in the interesting narrative, and in the unguarded warmth of her imagination, let her artless tongue run wild in her fa-

yourite's praise, till she had as fully and effectually informed her good aunt of the true state of her heart, as if she had studied to do so, in the most pointed terms.

LADY CARY replied with a significant smile, "I am much mistaken, Harriet, if
" your aversion to Captain Claverly does
" not proceed from more causes than you
" chose to confess the other day."

A CRIMSON suffusion of conscious guilt overspread Harriet's cheeks; she attempted an excuse, but her honest lips refused a passage to the disingenuous accents.

LADY CARY observing her confusion, replied, "What an honest world should
" we live in, my dear Harriet, if dissimu-
" lation was as repugnant to the practice
" of mankind in general, as it is to you;
" but suppose now, instead of doing vio-
" lence to your sincerity by studied eva-
" sions, you open your heart to me with-
" out

“out reserve. Do you think I shall not
“make every allowance? You are so
“amiable, my dear, so expressively good,
“that I am very sure your feelings and
“sentiments undisguised, must be the
“same.” Miss Westbury wished nothing
more than a proper opening to introduce
this subject more fully; thus encouraged,
she proceeded with her soul trembling on
her lips, to unfold the secret of her
bosom to her affectionate aunt. She re-
capitulated all she had before said of his
first introduction to her father, the hap-
piness of their situation, his person, his
merit; her beginning esteem; his con-
strained behaviour, and the uneasiness
it occasioned her; she described the scene
of the fire in the most lively expressions;
that his presence of mind alone had
saved her life, and how much he had
suffered in forcing through the flames to
her assistance; her fainting; the falling
in of the stairs; and the dangerous step
he had taken for her deliverance, by
throwing himself into the water, with her
in his arms; she painted the wildness of
his

his joy on the first recovery of her senses; his energetic thanks to providence for her preservation; the involuntary effusion of his heart, and the pleasure she received from it; explained the motives which had again induced him to suppress his feelings; and the studious manner he had avoided speaking to her, till their accidental meeting on the evening before her departure for Bath, and the turn their conversation had there unintentionally taken; she shewed her aunt the letters which she had received from him, and gave her an account of the one she had left for him at Bath, and the other which she had sent from London, without receiving an answer to either, and how much uneasiness she had experienced on the occasion, not only on her own account, but on his, as she was very sensible, his silence could only arise from his total ignorance concerning her.

LADY CARY thanked her in the most affectionate terms for her obliging and honest confidence: "I was certain, my
" dear

“dear Harriet,” said she, “from the
“goodness of your heart, you could
“have nothing to tell me to your disad-
“vantage. Your situation has been
“critically dangerous, and you have
“conducted yourself with uncommon
“propriety; under your circumstances,
“and at your age, is it astonishing you
“have not been romantically perfect?
“Mr. Lewisham’s conduct has also been
“extremely meritorious, even allowing
“a little for your partial colouring, the
“portrait must still deserve admiration;
“and amongst the inhabitants which
“composed your world, he certainly
“must have appeared a *black swan*. Few
“needy young men, with the temptation
“of your person and fortune continually
“before them, would have practised so
“much self-denial. Mr. Lewisham has
“acted honourably, he has acted nobly!
“but my dear Harriet, I cannot help
“wishing you had never met with a
“companion so very agreeable; your
“virtue has hitherto preserved you from
“imprudence, but I fear it will not be
“equally

“equally successful in preserving you
“from unhappiness. Let me seriously
“ask you, Miss Westbury, what you can
“possibly intend with respect to this
“young man?” “My dear aunt,” re-
plied Harriet, “I have no intention; I
“never had any; I could not preserve
“myself from being sensible of Mr.
“Lewisham’s merit; he was my only
“companion, and was continually with
“me; we walked, rode, read, and con-
“versed together, and to his obliging
“assiduity I owe the perfecting every
“little accomplishment I may be mistress
“of; he improved me in French, Ita-
“lian, geography, music, drawing,—and
“love,” interrupted Lady Cary with
a smile; “No madam,” said Harriet,
“I learned it sympathetically, without
“receiving a single lesson; but as I said
“before, Mr. Lewisham was master of
“every thing; he neglected not reason-
“and philosophy, patience and resigna-
“tion, the religious and moral, the
“social, and domestic duties of human
“life; he chose the books for my amuse-
“ment,

“ment, and pointed out their beauties
“for my instruction; in short, my dear
“madam, should I enumerate the ex-
“tent of my obligations to Mr. Lewish-
“am’s abilities, I should never have
“done: how then could I shut my eyes,
“or guard my heart, from a man, so
“infinitely superior to every other hu-
“man being I had ever seen; I admired
“him before I was sensible of it, nor did
“I know the nature of my feelings till
“it was too late to subdue them; in-
“deed, how could I attempt to subdue
“them? could I deny my obligations
“when he was perpetually obliging me?
“or could I refuse him my approbation
“when he was incessantly deserving it?
“I confess to you madam, I know no-
“thing of Mr. Lewisham’s family and
“connexions, and I hope you will do
“me the justice to believe, I could have
“no thought of marrying a man so cir-
“cumstanced; but I likewise confess,
“the involuntary preference and esteem
“I feel for him, will make me wish to
I 5 “be

"be excused marrying any other person."

"Your sentiments, my dear child," said Lady Cary, "are good, grateful, and just; how far they may be expedient, I cannot take upon me to say, you certainly are under infinite obligations to Mr. Lewisham, and I do not wonder at the effect gratitude has produced in a heart so amiable, and artless; I can only repeat what I before said, I wish you had never met with him."

CHAP. XVII.

JUST as they had finished the above conversation, a message was brought from Mr. Westbury, with many thanks to Lady Cary, for the honour she had done his daughter, and desiring her immediate

mediate return to Berkley-square. This unexpected request, surprized them both, but Harriet was excessively terrified; "I am sure, madam," said she, "something extraordinary must be the cause of this sudden recall, pray my dearest aunt, do not forsake me, I have no friend but you, for my father I fear will give up himself, and me, to the disposal of his wife; will you be good enough to come and see me to-morrow?" Lady Cary assured her she would, and having encouraged her to hope for the best, she departed for Berkley-square, where we must step before, in order to prepare for her reception.

We have already premised, that Mrs. Westbury did not love her daughter's company; and of course was very well pleased with Lady Cary's invitation, for removing her out of her way; but it was otherwise with the captain, he had no objection to Miss Westbury's society, and he began to think it high time to introduce his affair; he had before given
Mrs.

Mrs. Westbury a number of hints, which she did not think proper to understand, but he now spoke more intelligibly, and demanded a categorical answer, how, and when, she meant to proceed, as his finances were decreased too much to admit of any longer procrastination.

THE captain was a horrid clog on Mrs. Westbury, but unfortunately not to be shaken off, unless she could fix him more commodiously; she most heartily wished herself fairly rid of him, but knew not very well how to effect it, she had ever hoped, that Harriet by being continually exposed to, would at last melt before the ardour of his addresses, and by a clandestine engagement, secure her from every shadow of complaint, but as we before observed, she found herself mistaken, and had now nothing left for it, but a return to the practice of refined artifice.

THE day Harriet went to Lady Cary's, another letter arrived from Lewisham, which

which as usual, was examined by Mrs. Westbury; it was filled with the tenderness of his heart, and declaring himself unable to support the dreadful uncertainty of her health and happiness, and that if he heard not from her, in a few days, his impatience would compel him to make a personal enquiry after her in Berkley-square.

MRS. WESTBURY disliked the intelligence, but she was still ignorant of the writer, this letter, like the former, having no signature, but the letter L.; had it been explicit as to name and abode, she had been at no loss, as she could have answered it quite as well as Harriet, without his knowing any thing of the difference; she certainly was a woman who thought nothing of trouble, when the affairs of her friends were concerned; she read Miss Westbury's letters for her with a great deal of pleasure, and wished to give Mr. Lewisham satisfaction by answering them; but unluckily she knew not how; that however was not her fault,
nor

nor could she be thought the less attentive.

THE contents of this letter convinced her she had no time to lose, as it was absolutely necessary to marry Harriet, before this favoured mortal should appear; least his presence should inspire her with sufficient courage to elude their tyranny by flight: she therefore immediately held a council with her colleague, she pointed out the most vulnerable part of the fort they were to attack, and described her plan of operations, which meeting with his approbation, she drew up her forces, and began to play off her artillery in due form.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE late gay captain was suddenly low spirited, and his countenance strongly

strongly marked with dejection. Mrs. Westbury was the same, her eyes red, and swelled, and whenever she looked at her brother, the tears seemed ready to start; Mr. Westbury tenderly enquired the cause of their unhappiness, but received only sighs and evasions in reply; he begged and entreated, but all to no purpose, Mrs. Westbury was for the first time inflexible.

THE appearance of their distress still continued, and Mr. Westbury continued his entreaty to share it with them at least: he declared to Heaven, there was nothing in his power he would not do, for the satisfaction of a wife he so tenderly loved, and a friend he so sincerely esteemed; that his interest, and his fortune to the utmost farthing was at their command.

MRS. WESTBURY, smiling through her tears, replied, "he was all goodness, "and her heart was gratefully sensible "of it, but you know, my dear Sir," said she, "there are some evils which "admit

“ admit of no remedy but time ; such as
 “ the loss of a valuable friend, and several
 “ others. Our’s is an uneasiness of the
 “ mind, which cannot at present be re-
 “ lieved. I well know how ready your
 “ condescending goodness would be to
 “ attempt it, but that is the very reason
 “ which obliges me to conceal it ; were
 “ you less indulgent, I should be less cau-
 “ tious ; you must permit me, Sir, to
 “ keep this one circumstance to myself,
 “ and my whole heart shall be open to
 “ you on every other occasion.”

THREE days, no gleam of sunshine ap-
 peared ; the clouds increased on every
 side, till Mr. Westbury declared himself
 unable to support his situation, and that
 he would positively depart for the coun-
 try immediately, if they would not com-
 municate the cause of their unhappiness ;
 and again pledged his word and honour,
 for the performance of every thing in his
 power for their satisfaction ; Mrs. West-
 bury’s tears again flowed plentifully, no
 Niobe ever shed more ; “ she protested

“ no

“no woman was ever so distressed, but
“it was her duty to obey him; if he
“would spare her till the next day, she
“would endeavour to give him the sa-
“tisfaction he desired;” Mr. Westbury
thought this a great point gained, and
promised to be content.

CAPTAIN CLAVERLY'S dressing-room
joined the library, and the thinness of
the partition which divided them, was not
calculated to favour private conversation
in either; soon after Mr. Westbury had
obtained, or rather extorted the promise
before-mentioned, he entered the library
with an intention of amusing himself by
reading, but he heard Mrs. Westbury,
and her brother in the adjoining apart-
ment; the lady was evidently weeping,
and the affectionate captain endeavouring
to console her; he at first was going to
them, but on reflection, he thought his
circumstances might justify his attending
to their conversation; but before we re-
peat it, we will positively deny the truth
of the adage, which says, “listeners
“hear

“hear no good of themselves,” Mr. Westbury experienced the contrary, the Captain was speaking, “What my dearest Fanny can I possibly do? Why did you wrest this secret from me? fool that I was! had I kept my own counsel, you might have been happy, though I had been miserable?” “Do not say so,” replied the lady, “consider the friendship and affection, in which we have ever lived, and then judge if I can be happy in your absence, yet I see the necessity of your going; it is a sacrifice I owe to the affection of my husband, he is so very good, what can I do? how can I think of permitting him to take a step the world will view in such a disagreeable light? Miss Westbury is so amiable, and so very lovely, that I can neither wonder at, nor blame your partiality, but indeed we must conceal it, do but reflect a moment on our circumstances; Mr. Westbury has with a generosity unpractised but by himself, made me the happiest of women, by making me

“ me his wife, and do you not suppose,
“ many eyes are invidiously open to my
“ good fortune; should he be led by his
“ friendship for you, and his affection
“ for me, to think you worthy of his
“ daughter’s hand, what will not be said
“ of me; the conduct of the mother-in-
“ law will be liberally arraigned; my
“ designs, my artifice, will be held up
“ to public condemnation; in short, I
“ shall be regarded as the vilest of
“ women; the idea is insupportable, he
“ must not lessen his own consequence
“ by a farther consideration for us.”

“ My dear creature,” said the captain,
“ let me entreat you not to mention it;
“ you are already mistress of my sen-
“ timents, I would not have Mr.
“ Westbury even suspect my feelings
“ for the universe! No, be assured I
“ will conceal the situation of my heart,
“ though my life should be the sacrifice;
“ I cannot help adoring Miss Westbury;
“ but I can avoid confessing it. I can-
“ not support her presence, absence will
“ lessen

"lessen the acuteness of my happi-
 "ness, or soon put a period to my exist-
 "ence. To take advantage of Mr.
 "Westbury's friendship, would stamp
 "dishonour on my name for ever, and
 "every shadow of felicity would be lost
 "in the idea of guilt. Let us say no
 "more, my dear sister, on the subject;
 "I will depart early in the morning, and
 "you will then be at liberty to perform
 "your promise to Mr. Westbury; tell
 "him, Fanny, tell your worthy, valua-
 "ble husband, how much it cost me to
 "preserve my honour, and how much
 "I shall lose in losing his friend-
 "ship."

Mrs. Westbury's grief increased and
 she sobbed very audibly: "How severe,"
 say she, "is our fate, but our minds
 "will feel the balm of consolation, when
 "we reflect, severe as it was, we ful-
 "filled the utmost demand of principle
 "and duty, the clouds in which we are
 "now enveloped may suddenly separate;
 "but at present we must submit to the
 "influence

“influence of our ill stars, and guard our
“worthy friend against ourselves, and
“the benevolence of his own heart.”—

The weeping fair one was too much agitated to proceed, and the entrance of a servant ended the conversation.

MR. WESTBURY remained a few moments exceedingly embarrassed. Had any thing of the kind been directly proposed to him, he never would have forgiven either of them; but this was quite a different case; how amiable was his wife! how honourable and disinterested his friend! But should he, of all people in the world, be out done in generosity? had he not sworn to make them happy, if it was within the compass of his abilities? yet in tenderness of his character, they had refused to make use of his offer; nay, they would even deprive him of the power of doing it, by concealing the means till it was too late. But as an accident had discovered the cause of their uneasiness, was he exempt from his promise? certainly not; his word remained the same,

same, and his faith was pledged for his performance. What objection could Miss Westbury have to captain Claverly? or, indeed, what objection could the meddling world start on the occasion? his family entitled him to any connexion! as an officer, he is a gentleman, and his person and behaviour are certainly unexceptionable. Should he then, to oblige a set of people, who had nothing to do with him or his affairs, should he make an affectionate wife unhappy, and lose the society of an agreeable friend?

CHAP. XIX.

IN this manner did Mr. Westbury debate with himself, till the dinner-bell interrupted his cogitation. The captain was unwell, but with much difficulty swallowed a few spoonfulls of soup, at the earnest entreaty of his sister, who
seemed

seemed to have little more appetite than himself.

AFTER dinner he complained of the head-ach; Mrs. Westbury felt his hand, and declared him feverish. He frequently spoke to his servant, and affected to give him private orders; but in general, though delivered in a whisper, they were sufficiently intelligible to the ear of Mr. Westbury, who seemed to take no kind of notice, but who in fact, was holding consultation with himself, for the best mode of introducing the impediment which he was about to put to the intended journey: he very much feared he should not succeed, if he did not act with the utmost delicacy and circumspection, as the captain's stubborn honour was a most formidable obstacle, a very bugbear to his imagination.

In the evening he opened the knotty cause, by saying, "Captain, I want
"Mrs. Westbury and you to give me
"your sentiments on a point of some
"consequence.

“consequence. I have the greatest idea
 “of your friendship and good sense, or
 “you may depend on it, I should not
 “consult you in this instance: the fact
 “is, I wish to dispose of Miss Westbury;
 “she is of a very proper age to settle in
 “life, and I am desirous of knowing,
 “what sort of man you think most likely
 “to make her happy.”

THE captain replied with a sigh of *immeasurable length* and *abyssical profundity*, he must beg to be excused giving his opinion on that subject; the young lady could best decide what was most likely to succeed. Happiness was of a very delicate, and very various nature; every person almost understood it a different way; but with respect to matrimonial happiness, individuals must certainly chuse for themselves.

MR. WESTBURY observed every person ought to chuse in some measure, but if the choice of a young woman was properly directed, it could surely be of no dif-

disadvantage, he was not ambitious of seeing his daughter rich or great, but he wished to see her happy. Miss Westbury's fortune would be equal to thirty thousand pounds, and it was possible the whole of his possessions might descend to her; but as far as money would make her happy, that would be sufficient, a gentleman, a man of principle, and a man of honour, was the husband he wished her; he had an idea of such a one, whom he was inclined to believe had an affection for her, but he had never directly said it, and his notions of propriety were so singular, that he was apprehensive if he made him the offer, he should meet with a refusal.

THE captain replied, "Mr. Westbury must certainly be mistaken in his conjecture, for that no man at all worthy of her could refuse the lovely, the adorable, the almost divine Harriet."

"I BELIEVE, captain," said Mr. Westbury,
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bury, "you only say this in compliment
"to my daughter, let me ask you now,
"and answer me sincerely, if you was
"the man I allude to, how would you re-
"ceive an offer of the kind?"

"How, Sir," replied the captain,
"how should I receive it? On my knees,
"as a blessing sent from Heaven, to crown
"me the happiest of terrestrial beings."

"My dear," said Mr. Westbury, turn-
ing to his wife, "you must bear witness
"against your brother; captain I shall
"take you at your word, Miss Westbury
"is your's whenever you chuse to kneel,
"and receive her."

"LET me intreat you, Mr. Westbury,"
replied the captain, with the utmost so-
lemnity of aspect, "that you will not
"trifle with me on this head; you sup-
"posed the gentleman you alluded to,
"had an affection for your daughter,
"and you can have no reason to think
"that is my case!"

"WHY

“WHY not my friend,” said Mr. Westbury. “Is there any thing so extraordinary in your entertaining an affection for the lovely, the adorable, and almost divine Harriet.”

MRS. WESTBURY had hitherto sat silent, she now interposed, and begged she might be heard ; she flattered herself Mr. Westbury could not be serious in his proposal, yet his countenance led her to fear he was ; but she assured him it was impossible her brother should marry Miss Westbury, neither his present situation, or circumstances would admit of the idea ; Miss Westbury was an angel, and as such they had ever beheld her, a man of figure, distinction, and title, only could pretend to her, and such only must marry her. She dearly loved her brother, but she loved her own reputation, and his honour better. Miss Westbury was above his merit, and above his hopes, Mr. Westbury must excuse her, but she never would approve, never would consent, to a thing of the kind ; it was

absolutely impossible, and he must oblige her by giving up the point.

MR. WESTBURY was fairly astonished by his lady's warmth; she preached a doctrine he was unused to, he had never before in any one instance, been so directly contradicted by wife, daughter, or friend: but when he recollected the motive, from which her warmth proceeded, that a generous concern for what she thought his credit and interest had transported her to forget herself, he could not help, thinking she was to be excused, though not obliged: giving up a point, was a new thing to him, he had never given up one in his life, he had indeed been cheated out of a great many, but that was only to be done, by judiciously falling in with his ideas, and not by opposing them. He regarded the lady with a gravity of countenance bordering on austere; "Fanny," said he, "I beg you will remember the gentleman I design for my daughter, is Mrs. Westbury's brother, and surely there is nothing extraordinary

“extraordinary in my approving as
“a husband for Harriet, a man whose
“sister I married myself.”

MRS. WESTBURY was greatly affected by his reproof, and had recourse to tears, and intreaty without effect, Mr. Westbury at first requested, at last commanded, she would no more interfere, it pained him to refuse her any thing, but at present he was resolved, and therefore her entreaty, and the captain's evasive apologies, would be equally ineffectual; if indeed he chose to refuse Miss Westbury in direct terms, he certainly was at liberty to do so, but there their friendship must end, unless he could offer some much more reasonable objection; his pretended indifference would not do, as he believed he had much better information as to the real truth.

THE captain turned to Mrs. Westbury with the most unfriendly brow, “is it
“possible, madam,” said he, “that you
“can have made such an ill use of my
“con-

“confidence? You only could betray
“me, I have concealed the secret of my
“soul from every other person, and I
“meant to conceal it from the whole
“world.” “Mr. Westbury,” continued he, “if you know my feelings,
“you must likewise know the violence I
“do them, but my honour demands it,
“I can neither refuse Miss Westbury,
“nor accept her, my affection will not
“permit the one, and my circumstances
“forbid the other; the comparison you
“have drawn in support of your resolution,
“arises from a mistaken survey of
“facts, and will by no means bear investigation;
“when you married my sister,
“had she been the lowest of the creation,
“you raised her at once to an equality
“with yourself, but if I marry
“Miss Westbury with the disadvantage
“on my side, she sinks at once to my
“level; and believe me, Sir, the idea
“of her descending to me, would be
“insupportable; I am extremely sorry
“we have been led to this subject, but
“it

“it must be owing to the imprudence of
“Mrs. Westbury.”

THE lady protested her innocence, which Mr. Westbury confirmed, by assuring him he deceived himself, in supposing it was from Mrs. Westbury he had received the information to which he alluded, she had persisted in silence, contrary to all his intreaty, but nevertheless he had been informed, and knew he was not deceived, he confessed he had expected more complaisance in consequence of their sincere friendship; that after all he had said, he still remained in the same resolution, and knowing as he did, the situation of his heart, he would not be governed by ridiculous scruples, therefore, till tomorrow morning only, would he submit to be trifled with, but he should then expect his final answer, whether, he would increase the happiness of his family, by accepting Miss Westbury, or forfeit his friendship for ever by refusing her.

WHEN

WHEN he had concluded, he coldly and abruptly ordered candles, and without further ceremony or apology, wished the captain good night, and retired; not to bed, but to the library before mentioned, and Mrs. Westbury immediately accompanied her brother to his before-mentioned dressing-room, where they again began to debate on their very distressing situation.

THE pre-concerted journey was now deemed impracticable with any degree of prudence, as it would only serve to incense Mr. Westbury against him; his faithless breach of friendship never would be pardoned, nor should she be able to obtain his forgiveness, for conniving at his departure; that Mr. Westbury, great, good, and benevolent, as he was, would never excuse a step of the kind in either of them, nor indeed could she bear the thought of imposing on so very worthy, so very valuable a man.

BUT

BUT then what was to be done, they must, if possible, preserve themselves from an action, which would prejudice their character so much, the world would term them the most selfish interested people, and her friends must certainly entertain the same idea, but still they must be careful not to disoblige Mr. Westbury, if the evil could be evaded by prudence, they certainly would be justified in attempting it, but they must not think of surmounting it by violence.

THEY discussed various little plans, in which their honour, principle, gratitude, and obligations appeared in the most striking colours, but could fix on none to their satisfaction, their natural sincerity, rendered them so extremely averse to the practice of deceit, that they detested the idea of saving themselves by that means; yet surely a little stratagem formed on such laudable motives, could never be imputed to them as a crime; they therefore at last concluded, it would be most adviseable to gain time by seem-

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ing

ing compliance : that the next morning, agreeable to Mr. Westbury's appointment, the captain should consent to receive the hand of Miss Westbury, first stipulating if her free inclination could be obtained, but on no other terms ; that she should be left to her free choice without Mr. Westbury's deriving the least influence from his paternal authority, in consequence of which Mrs. Westbury should inform Miss Harriet of every particular, that she should point out how much she must lose, if she accepted a proposal so far beneath her merit and expectation, that there was no situation, however elevated, to which she had not the justest pretensions by her beauty, fortune, and accomplishments ; she was likewise to enumerate the difficulties, &c. of a military life, how unsettled she would continually be, and removed from her friends and connexions, and in a word, Mrs. Westbury was to endeavour all in her power to persuade Harriet from acceding to the treaty ; by this means Mr. Westbury would be satisfied, the captain's

tain's conditions fulfilled, and they should have performed their duty in guarding him against themselves from such an imprudent condescension, and further, in a few days, he should get recalled to his regiment, for whatever he suffered by his affection to the lovely girl, at present he must not indulge it.

MR. WESTBURY lost not a syllable of this conversation, he disliked the idea of their designing to deceive him, but their motive again restored them to his favour, nothing could be so liberal, nothing so disinterested, they certainly had a great deal of reason in what they advanced, but then their notions were too romantic, and should not be indulged, he heeded not the opinion of the world, his business was to please himself, he was happy, accident had made him master of their intention, and enjoyed the idea of circumventing and out-plotting them of all things; he retired from his hiding place as silently as possible, leaving the wife of his bosom, and the friend of his heart,

heart, at liberty to-laugh at the easy dupe of their artifice, and his own credulity.

WE presume it cannot be necessary for us to inform our readers that this conversation was designedly calculated for the ear of Mr. Westbury; Mrs. Westbury and her brother were sensible how very little Harriet was inclined in their favour, and though they knew the obstinacy of Mr. Westbury's temper, yet they supposed, or rather they feared, it was possible, that Harriet's tears and intreaty might induce her father to give up his purpose; with a view of guarding themselves against a misfortune of that kind, they enumerated in Mr. Westbury's hearing all the objections which they thought it likely Harriet would make, under pretence of persuading her by that means to take their part, against the intention of her father.

THEIR design had the desired effect; Mr. Westbury was surprized at a forbearance

ance so exemplary. Generosity was his own foible, the principle which generally actuated his conduct, of course, he could not think of quietly resigning his favourite hobby-horse; but then, his was a mistaken kind of generosity, and applied to objects, the secret springs of which he had no notion of tracing: the natural honesty of his own heart, led him to believe, people were really what they pretended to be; in a word, he was the greatest dupe in the world, while he supposed himself, implicitly directed by his own ideas.

CHAP. XXI.

THE next morning, when they entered the breakfast parlour, "Captain Claverly," said Mr. Westbury, with a smile, occasioned we suppose by the

the brilliancy of his designs ; “ are we
“ friends or not ?”

“ FRIENDS, sir,” replied the captain, pathetically placing his hand on his breast, “ I must be the most ungrateful
“ of men, if I am ever otherwise than
“ the friend of Mr. Westbury, and I
“ shall be the most unhappy of men,
“ when Mr. Westbury is not a friend of
“ mine.”

“ YOUR first word, captain,” said Mr. Westbury, “ fully answered my question,
“ but your sentiment has entirely explained
“ away your sense, I must therefore beg
“ the favour of you to answer me again ;
“ are we friends or not ?”

“ FRIENDS,” replied the captain, “ if
“ I am happy enough to obtain Miss
“ Westbury’s favour, I cannot refuse so
“ distinguishing a mark of your appro-
“ bation ; but you must allow any reluc-
“ tance on her part, shall be deci-
“ sive.”

“ No

"No conditions, sir," said Mr. Westbury, rather abruptly, "I must decide for myself; a charte blanche on your part, or nothing;" the captain bowed, and Mr. Westbury gave orders to his servant, containing the message delivered at Lady Cary's, which threw Harriet and that lady into the surprize before mentioned.

Miss WESTBURY returned agreeable to her father's mandate, and he received her with more tenderness than he had before exprest towards her for some time. When Mr. Westbury had most business, he was most at leisure; because he could divide his attention to every part; but when his mind was engaged by one object only, he devoted himself entirely to it, nor spared a single thought for any thing else. His whole stock of ideas had been long monopolized by his wife, but the captain now demanding a part, he had likewise a part to bestow on his daughter.

MRS.

MRS. WESTBURY and her brother, felt themselves a little awkward. The affair was now at a crisis, and the moment was now arrived, on the result of which, the captain's future hopes depended. Mr. Westbury appeared in high spirits, and Harriet meeting with nothing very particular, began to get the better of her apprehensions.

BUT the next morning all her fears returned; Mr. Westbury requested her attendance in his room, and opened the congress, by asking how long her mother had been dead? Harriet, surprized at the question, replied with a sigh, two years.

"I cannot blame you, my dear," said Mr. Westbury, "for sighing at the mention of your mother, it is a proof of the sensibility, and goodness of your heart; your mother was a most amiable woman, and truly worthy your tenderest remembrance; but since her death, Harriet, what has been my behaviour?"

"haviour? have I ever denied the most
"trifling request of your's, or opposed
"your inclination by one of my own?
"Speak, my dear girl, your free opinion
"of my conduct, as to yourself."

MISS WESTBURY, with a tear gently stealing down her polished cheek, replied, his behaviour to her had ever been that of the most affectionate parent, and most obliging friend; that her wishes had ever been anticipated by his solicitude, and her happiness had ever appeared to be his first consideration.

MR. WESTBURY said, he was much obliged to her for her dutiful sense of his indulgence; that her amiable conduct in return, had ever merited the utmost distinction of a father's fondness; he indeed hoped, his had never been materially deficient. All that had hitherto passed was of no great importance; but he had now a request to make on a subject of some consequence, to which, he thought, he had a right to expect her assent,

assent, unless she could give very good reasons for a refusal, and to such his ear would be ever open. "The affair I allude to," said he, "is marriage, but before I proceed to particulars, give me your opinion of it in general."

POOR Harriet trembled like a criminal in the hour of condemnation. She knew her sentence was fixed, and her judge would decide exactly the same, whether she pleaded or not; but perceiving he expected her answer, she declared it was impossible to say any thing on a subject which she had never thought of; that she was too happy in his friendship and protection, to feel any inclination for a change of situation, and she hoped he would excuse her entertaining any idea of the kind till she did.

MR. WESTBURY replied, he could by no means think it necessary or expedient, to admit of her conclusion; the first part might be true, indeed, he was firmly persuaded it could hardly be otherwise. No

young

young woman could think seriously and judiciously on a subject, in which she was not interested, and that she could not be interested in an affair of this kind till the sanction of her friends had made her so. The first step certainly ought to proceed from the parent; children had an indisputable right to a negative voice, and their negative ought to be attended to, if supported by reason, which he was inclined to believe was very seldom the case. When youth chose for itself, very disagreeable consequences frequently, indeed, generally ensued: because, their choice was influenced by erroneous maxims, of which, they repented when too late; but when experience was to decide, the case was widely different; passion gave way to prudence, and the mind free from idle delusion, was only swayed by the clearest facts. In his opinion, a young woman like her, free from prepossession, could make no reasonable objection to the will of a parent, who evidently studied nothing but her happiness, and the happiness of his family in his choice;

choice; he was very sensible, in an engagement of this kind, affection was necessary; but not that romantic kind of affection so much talked of by girls, but which in reality, consisted of nothing, a mere momentary blaze of straw. There was an affection of the mind, abstracted from childish notions, and starts of passion, which every amiable object must naturally feel for another; when mutually blended in a social intercourse of tender obligations; he had likewise considered, that a general similitude was necessary to constitute happiness; personal equality was certainly essential; and that being his opinion, he was not about to sacrifice her to a disproportionate alliance, for the sake of seeing her in a splendid situation. The man of his choice, was exactly the counterpart of herself; his person and disposition, strikingly resembling her own, and his character and behaviour unexceptionable; in such a union could she fail of being happy, unless she made it her business to be otherwise?

MARRIAGE

MARRIAGE was a most important change in a young woman's situation, the name of wife and mother, were by no means empty sounds, but words long employed to express a train of peculiar duties, and obligations appertaining to them respectively, from which no woman could be exempt, when she came under their denominations, whatever rank in life providence allotted her to fill. "Of these duties, Harriet," continued he, "I shall say nothing; the uniform conduct of your own incomparable mother, and the more recent propriety of her excellent successor, have been examples for your future behaviour; infinitely more to the purpose, than every thing I could say, and you have too much innate goodness, not to apply them properly; but, my dear Harriet, it is unnecessary to dwell longer on the subject; I have no reason to doubt your ready acquiescence with my determination, when I inform you, my friend captain Claverly is the gentleman, whose happiness I intend

“intend to connect with yours. You
“have known the captain some time,
“and cannot be insensible of his merit,
“convinced as I am, no objection can
“be formed on your part, I shall fix an
“early day for the performance of the
“ceremony, which I will make you ac-
“quainted with to-morrow,” and with-
out deigning to expect an answer, he im-
mediately rose and quitted the apartment,
leaving his daughter to digest, as well as
she could, the contents of his paternal
consideration.

CHAP. XXII.

POOOR Miss Westbury, long as she had
expected, long as she had dreaded the
present blow, found herself utterly un-
prepared for its reception. The posi-
tive and imperious stile, in which her
father had delivered the conclusion of his
address,

address, gave her fully to understand the extent of what she had to expect from his indulgence. She saw at once the inefficacy of prayers and expostulation, for procuring a mitigation of her sentence; no alternative would be accepted, her despotic ruler expected implicit obedience and any attempt to remonstrate, would be construed into open rebellion.

YET unwilling as she was to incur his displeasure, by a refusal, she could not entertain a thought of risking her future happiness, by complying with a demand so arbitrary and unreasonable; she feared her inability to support the terror of his contracted brow; but even that appeared less dreadful, than the sacrifice by which only she could avoid it. The Park conversation had taken deep root in her mind, and she now sincerely regretted the not having imparted it to her aunt, for by that means, she might have learnt the express meaning of Sir William Burt's mysterious observation. When she first met

met that gentleman at Lady Cary's, she fully designed to do so; but on reflection, a little vanity interfered, and would not permit her to mention the indelicacy of his behaviour relative to herself, and therefore, she was obliged to suppress the whole; but exclusive of the bad impression those remarks had made against the parties concerned, and exclusive of her heart's tender attachment to Mr. Lewisham, though neither of them obstacles easily surmounted, she had still numberless objections to the captain; indeed, she had nothing but objections, and the more she reflected, the more she was confirmed in the justice of her decision against him; however, she concluded it would be best to avoid, if possible, a renewal of the subject with her father, till she had advised with Lady Cary, who she doubted not, would, agreeable to her promise, see her next morning, and she felt herself inclined to hope, something of consequence from the friendship and influence of that lady.

SHE

SHE was not deceived in her opinion of her Ladyship's attention, she had the pleasure of hearing her arrival in Berkeley-square, announced much too early for a fashionable visitor, but before we say a word of their conversation, we must relate what passed in Harley-street, after Miss Westbury had been removed by her father's writ of *habeas corpus*.

C H A P. XXIII.

LADY CARY, though an exceeding good woman, was nevertheless a woman of the world, she certainly was not backward to distinguish merit in general, yet she was inclined to believe a large portion of the blind goddesses favour, might be reckoned a tolerable equivalent for trifling deficiencies, she sincerely admired and esteemed her niece, nor was she insensible to the ami-

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able

able parts of Mr. Lewisham's character, she confessed to herself, he must possess a number of valuable ingredients in the grand recipe for a husband ; but he wanted title and fortune, and these were two articles, in her opinion, extremely essential, could she have enumerated them in the large catalogue of his recommendations, she would have been very well pleased with his affection for Miss Westbury ; but as they were entirely out of the question, she did not look with a very benign eye on her niece's affection for him, her Ladyship was not displeased with the discontinuance of his correspondence, which had given Harriet so much uneasiness, she sincerely wished it might continue, as she flattered herself, if Miss Westbury met with nothing to remind her of her lover, her passion would subside of itself, and his idea give place to the assiduity and attention of some new object, and she hoped that object might be no other, than her favourite Sir William Burt. But though her Ladyship was willing to give up something to the good things of this world,

world, she had no idea of giving up all ; and if the question had been, should her niece be very great, or very happy, she would have decided in a moment, and splendour would have fallen a sacrifice to felicity ; therefore, though she wished a change in the object of Miss Westbury's favour, she knew it must be voluntary on her part, or at least, only aided by the gentlest admonition, as all compulsory measures would be infinitely more likely to ruin, than accomplish her hopes ; this was her ladyship's reason for wishing to procure Harriet's removal from her father's family, in favour of her own, as she thought herself exceedingly well qualified by her experience and knowledge of human nature, to manage with address, the tenderness and sensibility of her young friend, which wanted nothing but judiciously inclining towards a more proper channel.

THE interruption which Mrs. Westbury had given to the correspondence of Harriet and Lewisham, was equally favourable

able to the purpose of Lady Cary; though she had no idea to whom she was indebted for the promotion of her views; she however wished to prevent every occasion of renewing their correspondence, and thought herself justifiable in making use of his silence for her own advantage, if it should happen that a proper opportunity offered; yet in the moment she resolved to practice against their attachment, she sincerely pitied them both, and could not help questioning the dispensation of providence, by asking, why two young persons so equally amiable, but unequally circumstanced, should have been thrown into a situation, where it was next to impossible for them to avoid the train of unhappiness, into which they must naturally be led by their sensibility; she believed Mr. Lewisham deserved every thing but Miss Westbury, and regretted her inability to reward his merit, consistently with her notions of what she owed herself and family in the opinion of the world, though she at the same time acknowledged the opinion to
which

which she sacrificed her own, was frequently founded on the most ridiculous and fallacious principles ; she likewise felt a very large portion of tenderness for Miss Westbury, and sincerely wished to promote her happiness in every instance, save and except the single one on which that happiness depended ; but, as we before observed, she hoped much from Lewisham's absence and silence, as she was fully persuaded they would establish a prejudice against him in the mind of Harriet, which joined to a succession of new objects, could hardly fail of effacing his idea from her bosom ; we confess her Ladyship's conclusion was rather severe on her sex, but we are sorry to add, there is too much truth in the remark in general, though the conduct of our friend Harriet, and a few more instances which we could enumerate if we chose, encourages us to think more favourably of female stability. We could indeed plead her Ladyship's own practice against her theory, if we thought it legal to make her condemn herself, since neither
a suc-

a succession of ill-treatment during his life, nor a variety of splendid temptations after his death, had been able to remove from her affection, the man who first entirely possessed her heart ; we are therefore inclined to believe the maxim before-mentioned, must have been established on a mistaken principle, and only confirmed by the practice of a few individuals, who absolutely erred in a matter of fact, which we must endeavour to explain.

THEIR heads only had been affected, while their hearts were entirely out of the question, and the restless emotion by them ycleped love, was, in reality, of a very different nature ; the one is an ethereal ray of pure essence, which beaming on the breast of innocence and virtue, gently insinuates itself by degrees, till it has gained the inmost recesses of the heart, where it incorporates with, and establishes it's influence, over every property of the mind.

THE

THE other, is nothing more than a light immaterial vapour, produced by vanity and flattery, which wanting the gravity, necessary to sink into the heart, only gains admission into that part of the cranium, wherein is deposited a soft substance distinguished by the appellation of brain; now it is supposed in giddy capricious habits, the brain floats in a sharp acrimonious fluid, and the vapour before-mentioned, being strongly impregnated with alkaline particles, no sooner enters the same cavity, than they mix, and 'tis nothing more than the effervescence arising from this coalition, which causes the chimerical illusion, so often mistaken for the tender passion, although the resemblance is too trifling to deceive any, but superficial observers; hence it is, that the epithets, whimsical, and capricious, are so liberally bestowed by undiscerning wittlings on what is in reality the most stable sensation of the soul, but being themselves unable to detect the impostor, they confound one with the other, and the purest gold is despised, because Dutch metal

metal is somewhat like it. How Lady Cary came to give into a sarcasm so illiberal, we can no otherwise account, than from a natural proneness in the human mind, to believe whatever we are strongly inclined to wish.

C H A P. XXIV.

BUT to return to our narrative ; while her Ladyship remained fluctuating between the dictates of law and equity, the chariot of Sir William Burt drove up to her door, and she instantly determined to learn his sentiments of Miss Westbury ; Sir William had no sooner entered, than he led to the conversation she wished, by eagerly enquiring after her charming niece ; Lady Cary replied, she had just been deprived of her company by her father's recalling her to Berkeley-square ; "I know not," continued she,

she, "what his reason may be for so doing, but the dear girl was so exceedingly distressed by the unexpected summons, that she has left me quite melancholy."

SIR WILLIAM expressed himself a lively sharer in her uneasiness: "I am," says he, "particularly disappointed, as I had flattered myself with the honour of attending your ladyship and Miss Westbury to the new opera this evening, as it is for the benefit of the great Vestris."

"GREAT!" replied her ladyship, with peculiar emphasis; "Do you know, Sir William, your expression strikes me as *greatly* ridiculous? I should most certainly have been very happy to have accompanied Miss Westbury, under your escort, but I assure you, *great* as he is, his *greatness* loses but little by my absence, my plaudit would be too faint to obtain notice." "Your ladyship must give me leave," said Sir William, "to express my surprize at the

“singularity of your taste; I thought
“the excellence of Vestris had been uni-
“versally acknowledged:” “Oh, cer-
“tainly,” replied Lady Cary, “I think
“him a most incomparable dancer, and
“do all possible justice to his excellence;
“it is but natural for *great* men to excel.
“—We read of Alexander the Great,
“Peter the Great, and Louis the Great,
“we have likewise had a great Marlbo-
“rough, and a great Chatham; and
“as instances of true greatness, more re-
“cent and more glorious still, we may
“justly adduce the Governor General of
“India, whose conduct has done such
“immortal honour to his name and
“country; and our present very able
“minister. These great men all had,
“and have their excellence, no doubt.
“You have now pointed out another—the
“*great* Vestris; and lo, and behold, this
“*great* man is distinguished from his
“cotemporaries, because he vaults a few
“inches higher, and preserves an equili-
“brium in one position a few moments
“longer than any other *great* man of the
“age.

“age. You, Sir William, are a senator of Great Britain, a pillar of this glorious constitution; now when you shall have occasion to mention the statesman, whose eloquence is employed in support of his country’s rights and privileges; or the gallant veteran, who bravely leads her armies in defence of her territorial domains: what words will you find to express your sense of their deserts? Your patriot, your commander, must be great men; so is your opera dancer!

“You must excuse the comparison, my friend, but you remind me of a very fine gentleman, who used to visit me daily, for the express purpose of pinning up my hair; he entered one morning big with something of vast importance; hardly allowing himself time to breathe, he began; your ladyship has heard of Mr. Montete. The name was not familiar, nor could I recollect it; I replied in the negative; no! says he with astonishment, not
“heard

“heard of Montete? I again referred to
“my memory, but in vain, and again
“answered no; no! said he, dear your
“ladyship, what! what! never heard of
“the *great* Montete? The fellow’s im-
“pertinence provoked me, I demanded
“an explanation; when the *great* Mon-
“tete, proved to be a person, of no less
“consequence, than a Parisian hair-dresser,
“who made himself *great* but the day
“before, by making the head of a
“fashionable lady a *great* deal too *great*
“for the door of her vis-a-vis.”

“My dear Lady Cary,” replied Sir
William, “I am most gratefully sensible
“of your reproof; your sentiments, I
“make no doubt, are extremely just,
“but I assure you, I never spent a thought
“on the subject; and permit me to add,
“I never intended it. I am content to
“take all these matters on the opinion of
“the public, and form my expressions
“without refining on their propriety,
“while your ladyship loses the spirit of
“pleasure, by moralizing on its princi-
“ple.”

“ple. Your system is certainly the
“wisest, but as certainly mine is the
“easiest: but now, supposing I become
“as wise and discerning as your lady-
“ship, what benefit shall I derive from
“it? since I confess to you, however
“rational my sentiments might be, I
“should not dare to publish them against
“the established fashionable practice, I
“therefore request you will not attempt
“to rectify my ideas, as it will only serve
“to render me really culpable. I now
“join the giddy throng in pursuit of an
“imaginary deity, while my senses re-
“main neuter; but if I permit your lady-
“ship to convince me the phantom is
“unworthy of my pursuit, what will be
“the consequence? why, my practice
“will continue exactly the same, and
“the evidence of my senses will be a-
“gainst me; I shall then think right,
“and act wrong; whereas if I now
“really err, I do it without thinking at
“all.”

CHAP.

C H A P. XXV.

LADY CARY smiled at Sir William's conclusion, "It must be confessed," said she, "you reason most admirably in defence of your own follies; you have only to lower the properties of your heart to a level with the state of your head, and you will become the quintessence of insignificance. I intended to enquire your opinion of my cousin Harriet, but I find it would be absurd to ask a question of the kind, of a gentleman who is above thinking for himself."

"No," said Sir William, "your ladyship mistakes the case, I only take the opinion of the public on trust; where the subject immediately relates to them, I understand the fashion of amusements, like the fashion of a coat, or any other part of dress, which I give into, to avoid singularity; but on a question, where my sense is not likely

“likely to incur the general censure, I
“dare venture to decide for myself.”

“MISS WESTBURY is an enigma, which
“if you will help me to solve, I shall be
“obliged to you, in the first place: for
“so young a lady, she appears uncom-
“monly grave, yet at the same time
“there is an expressive archness in her
“eyes and countenance, strongly indi-
“cating a lively disposition; now cheer-
“fulness being not only perfectly inno-
“cent in itself, but a desirable ingre-
“dient in the mind of youth, if she
“really possesses vivacity, why does she
“attempt to conceal it, by a reserve,
“which is neither amiable nor natural?”

“SECONDLY, When I first saw Miss
“Westbury at your house, you informed
“me she was a young lady of character,
“and a relation of yours; I assure you
“I was not more surprized by the intel-
“ligence than by her appearance here,
“for but the day before I met her in
“St. James’s Park, under the most sus-
“picious

"picious circumstances imaginable. I
 "confess to you there was something in
 "the young lady's appearance which
 "engaged my attention, and conceiving
 "her situation authorized the free in-
 "dulgence of my curiosity, I looked at
 "her in a manner, which entirely pre-
 "cluded all doubt of her identity at se-
 "cond sight; I might have been induced
 "to disbelieve my own senses, as to the
 "person of her companions; but Lord
 "Bloomer was with me, and he had
 "been too well acquainted with them
 "both to admit a probability of our be-
 "ing deceived. I did not mention this
 "circumstance to your ladyship be-
 "fore, because I am convinced my be-
 "haviour at the time was too particular
 "to escape Miss Westbury's notice, and
 "as I am certain she recollected it, when
 "she met me there, I did not doubt but
 "you would receive full information
 "from herself, and I have been in
 "daily expectation of a sage lecture
 "from your good ladyship on the subject
 "of my impertinence."

"LADY

LADY CARY replied, "The first part
"of your observation is extremely just,
"Miss Westbury really possesses spirit and
"vivacity, but domestic uneasiness, by
"oppressing her mind, has given her a
"turn of gravity inconsistent with her
"age. She is by no means so happy as she
"deserves; her mother has been dead
"about two years, and her father is a
"man, whose character seems to be
"made up of contradictions. How-
"ever, he was not insensible to the me-
"rit of his daughter, till a few months
"since the wonder-working god, willing
"to give an out-of-the-way specimen
"of his power, shot him quite through
"the heart, from the artillery of a pair
"of blue eyes. The poor gentleman
"must have been desperately wounded
"indeed, but having heard matrimony
"was almost infallible in cases of love,
"he ventured the experiment, and gave
"his hand to a lady about the age of his
"daughter. By this connexion Miss
"Westbury has lost a father, and gain-
"ed a great deal of uneasiness; and from
"thence

“thence arises the gravity which meets
“with your disapprobation. As to the
“second part of your charge, I can say
“nothing but that I apprehend you have
“made a little mistake as to person-
“ality.”

SIR WILLIAM assured her he could not be mistaken, and again asserted what he said before. “I am positive,” continued he, “as to the person of Miss Westbury, “and as positive as to her companions; “the lady was a young, fair, shewy “woman, somewhat taller than herself; “and the gentleman, about the middle “size, in the uniform of a military officer.”

LADY CARY replied with a smile, “if “that was the case, he might be perfectly right; but what objection could “he make to Harriet’s friends? That “lady was no other than the present Mrs. “Westbury, of whom she had been speaking, and the gentleman was her brother, captain Claverly.” “No, my “dear madam,” said Sir William, “that “is

“is impossible, it was not Mrs. West-
“bury; the *gentleman*, I confess, was Jack
“Claverly, the captain, I fancy; of his
“own creation: nor was the lady his
“sister, unless it be in iniquity. Her
“name was Baily, they were both inti-
“mately acquainted with Lord Bloomer,
“the *gentleman* was his gentleman, who
“had the honour of dressing and undress-
“ing him; he was likewise particu-
“larly useful in the honourable employ-
“ment, which Mercury is said to have
“filled for the service of the heathen
“gods; and when I inform your lady-
“ship it was in consequence of Mr. Cla-
“verly’s industry in this particular line,
“that Miss Baily was introduced to the
“notice of his lordship, I believe you
“will find no difficulty in ascertaining
“the nature of their acquaintance. The
“strength of my own memory might
“have been doubtful, but lord Bloomer
“confirmed my opinion, and it is not
“likely he should be mistaken in the
“person of a woman who had lately been
“his mistress, and a man who had as
“lately

“lately been his servant. You must be
“sensible this could not be Mrs. West-
“bury, and I confess I am exceedingly
“surprized at Miss Westbury’s appearing
“so improperly attended.”

SIR WILLIAM’S conclusion threw her
ladyship into a profound reverie. After
a moment’s silence, “Ah, Sir William,”
said she, “what a character have you
“given me! but are you sure of what
“you say?”

He replied, “he was extremely sorry
“that she should place so little confidence
“in his veracity, and again adverted to the
“impossibility of his erring, from the con-
“curing testimony of his friend.” Lady
Cary made no reply, but seemed so much
taken up with her own thoughts, that Sir
William soon after retired, leaving her
to a mental discussion of the subject
which they had found so incomprehen-
sible.

HER

HER ladyship, from a moment's reflection, did not doubt but that Sir William was perfectly right in all he had advanced, nor did she doubt the truth of her own conjectures; that the lady was exactly what he had described her, was by no means improbable; at the same time, that was no real obstacle to her being the wife of Mr. Westbury, if he was weak enough to make her so. She had never heard of any family that they pretended to in London, and at Bath they were known to no body. But conceiving it possible, the more she reflected, the more she might be bewildered in a maze of uncertainty. She thought it most prudent to wait the result of her visit to Harriet next day, in order to learn the necessary information.

LADY CARY was at best no admirer of Mrs. Westbury; her manners were not such as she thought natural to a gentlewoman, and her first prejudice had continually increased with her intimacy. As her coolness and neglect of Miss Westbury

bury became more and more evident; Mr. Westbury had not escaped his share of her censure on the same occasion; she had penetrated sufficient to read his real character in the most trifling of his actions; and his overstrained devotion to his wife was too ridiculous to pass unnoticed by a woman, whose partiality for the daughter of his sister, inclined her to look with a jaundiced eye on the least amiable side of every member of her family: a proper degree of domestic attention and politeness, she thought highly commendable; but Mr. Westbury carried his complaisance to the summit of slavish affection, and the lady received it with a supercilious condescension, which seemed to say, admire my importance!

I THOUGHT, said she to herself, that woman's haughtiness must arise from original meanness, but I did not suppose her so familiar with infamy. Good heaven! if my fears are just, what a being has that infatuated man made the mother of my sister's child? but take care Mrs. Westbury,

Westbury, like the Jay in Peacock feathers, you may for a little while dazzle the eyes of your beholders by a pompous display of your borrowed plumes, but the impostor will be visible at last; for be assured, it must be no common capacity to deceive with success, for any length of time.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

